

VegFest Houston

Yafah Asiel



Topic: "Transition Diet to Regenerative Health", plus Vegan Food Demo

Yafah Asiel has over 25 years experience as a nutritionist, vegan chef, holistic health practitioner. Yafah is the author of [The New Soul Vegetarian Cookbook](#). She has appeared in radio and television interviews and conducts vegan cooking demos around the globe, with recipes published in Essence Magazine and Vegetarian Times. Yafah resides in Georgia and has helped launch the popular and world-wide restaurant chain Soul Vegetarian, with restaurants in Chicago, Atlanta, DC, Charleston to name a few and others in the Virgin Islands and Ghana.

Baxter Montgomery, MD



Topic: "The Food Prescription for Better Health", plus vegan food demo

Baxter Montgomery, MD is a Houston cardiologist and plant-based health expert, Clinical Assistant Professor of Medicine in the Division of Cardiology at the University of Texas and a Fellow of the American College of Cardiology, Founder of [Montgomery Heart and Wellness](#), author of [The Food Prescription for Better Health](#), recipient of the 2010 PCRM (Physicians Committee For Responsible Medicine) [Award for "Compassion in Medicine"](#).

Amber Callahan



Topic: "How to get the most health benefit from food and exercise to meet weight loss or athletic performance goals"

Amber Callahan is a vegan certified personal fitness trainer and marathon competitor. She is the founder of [PlantFit](#) and specializes in plant-based fitness training. In addition to educating the public about vegan fitness and nutrition, she is a distributor of [Arbonne vegan products](#). Amber is proud to be the parent of two vegan boys! She also actively competes in marathons around the country. Amber is currently working on her Nutritional Coach certification and works at a popular fitness center in Sugar Land, Texas.

Alan Clune, Ph.D.



Topic: "The Humane Myth and Abolitionist Animal Rights", plus "Vegan 101"

Alan Clune, Ph.D. is an esteemed professor of Philosophy and Applied Ethics at Sam Houston State University in Texas. He is a graduate of State University of NY at Buffalo. Alan is the organizer of [The Woodlands Vegan Meetup](#) and a committee member of the [Vegan Society of PEACE](#). He has protested against animal exploitation at the Houston rodeo and circus venues. Alan is vegan and has a passion for raw vegan cuisine and abolitionist animal rights philosophies.

2013 Festival Speakers

VegFest Houston

Anuj Arun Shah, JD, Ph.D.

Topic: Festival Welcome, plus "Vegan 101"



Anuj Arun Shah, JD, Ph.D. is an animal rights and vegan advocate for over 20 years now. He is a board member for the [Vegan Society of PEACE](#), a host for [Vegan World Radio on KPFT](#) in Houston, and has served on the boards of both the Vegetarian Society of Hawaii and Animal Rights Hawaii. He is currently a member of both the Texas State Bar and the Houston Bar Association's Animal Law Sections, as well as the Animal Legal Defense Fund.

Kristen Lee Ohanyan

Topic: "Raising Vegan Children", plus "Vegan 101"



Kristen Lee Ohanyan is a vegan and animal rights activist for 10 years now, and a human rights activist for decades. She is the President and Co-founder of [Vegan Society of P.E.A.C.E.](#) (with her husband Tosh Schurz) -- a 100% volunteer-run nonprofit organization which debuted in Houston in 2004. She has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Sociology with a minor in Cultural Anthropology. Kristen was named a "Farm Animal Rights Hero" in a 2008 Campaign Update by the Farm Animal Rights Movement in D.C. Her organization was [awarded "Most Notable Outreach By A Group"](#) in 2007 by the North American Vegetarian Society. She is a vegan parent and active in children's fitness and the PTA.

Chef Pat Greer

Vegan Food Demonstration for Kids



Chef Pat Greer is the owner of [Pat Greer's Vegan Kitchen](#) and YaYa's RawRah. She is also the co-founder of Central City Co-op -- the first organic co-op in Houston! Pat is a leading pioneer of the raw vegan movement in Houston and has been teaching vegan foods classes for years. In addition, she hosts the [Eco-ology weekly radio program on KPFT 90.1 FM](#). She has a passion for raw, natural foods and her kindness and warmth flow into everything she prepares. You'll find her booth every Saturday at a local farmers market in Houston. Pat will be sharing her love of raw vegan cuisine during her food demonstrations and will be providing a special food demo for kids this year!

Stephanie Hoban, LD, RD

Vegan Food Demonstration



Stephanie Hoban, LD, RD earned a BS in Nutrition from New York University, graduating Cum Laude, and a MS in Nutrition from Texas Women's University, graduating Magna Cum Laude. She is a Registered and Licensed Dietitian, as well as a Natural Foods Chef, trained at The Natural Gourmet Institute in New York City. Stephanie is the founder of [Ripe Healthy Seasonal Cuisine](#). She currently works full-time as a Dietitian for a restaurant concept in Houston, Texas and also runs [a pop up market cafe](#) at a local farmers market on Sundays.

2013 Festival Speakers

VegFest Houston

Alexander Ansari

Topic: "Going Vegan and Staying Diverse in the Nation's Most Diverse City"



Alexander Ansari is the co-founder of [Stay Diverse](#), a Houston-based organization which promotes diversity here in the nation's most diverse city. StayDiverse encourages others to grow with the times and try something new, meet someone new of a different culture, learn something new and do something new. Alexander is also a talented musician who performs at festivals around Houston with Rocko Stedy Narvios. Their popular song, "So Many Reasons to be a Vegan" debuted at VegFest Houston 2012. Alexander will also speak about going vegan in the nation's most diverse city.

Rocko Stedy Narvios

Topic: "Going Vegan and Staying Diverse in the Nation's Most Diverse City"



Rocko Stedy Narvios is the co-founder of [Stay Diverse](#), a Houston-based organization which promotes diversity here in the nation's most diverse city. The mission of Stay Diverse is to encourage people to MEET, LEARN, and DO. Meet new people, learn something new from those people, do what you just learned. Rocko is a talented musician. You'll often see him on stage with Alexander Ansari. They will be performing their popular song, "So Many Reasons to be a Vegan", which debuted at VegFest Houston 2012. Rocko will speak about losing over 50 pounds by going vegan how easy it is to live vegan in the nation's most diverse city!

Bernadette Session

Vegan Food Demonstration for Kids, plus "Vegan 101"



Bernadette Session is a passionate vegan with an amazing collection of vegan cookbooks. She is the Community Relations Coordinator for [Vegan Society of PEACE](#), as well as a radio personality for [Vegan World Radio on KPFT](#) in Houston. Bernadette volunteers for Child Advocates and numerous other nonprofit organizations which help people, animals and the planet. She will be presenting a special vegan food demo for kids at VegFest Houston this year.

Charles C. Coursey

Topic: "Inspiring Schools to Grow Community Vegetable Gardens"



Charles C. Coursey is a teacher extraordinaire at Pershing Middle School in Houston, Texas. He created and operates the school's very own vegetable garden. You'll find him at Pershing Middle School every Saturday for their school-run vegetable farmers market. He will be speaking about starting vegetable gardens in the local community and public schools.

2013 Festival Speakers