

## ★ **The Modern Mountain Cookbook: A Plant-Based Celebration of Appalachia**

**Jan A. Brandenburg**

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A cookbook rooted in warm memories of stories and meals shared around tables laden with comforting home-cooked food, Jan A. Brandenburg's *The Modern Mountain Cookbook* honors both the long-held traditions of generations of Appalachian women and the modern desire for cruelty-free, healthful, plant-based cuisine.

Chatty and tinged with nostalgia, the book is as much about story as it is about cooking. While representing a personal commitment to veganism, with its recipes updated and designed to appeal to vegan sensibilities, it doesn't take a hard line with meat eaters. Instead, it tempts and entices, even going as far as to recommend several types of meat-replacement products to smooth the transition.

Suggestions for purchasing and caring for kitchen equipment take some of the guesswork out of challenges like seasoning a cast-iron skillet and how to use a combination of bread machine and oven to save time and still produce shapely, brown-topped loaves. A handy guide to equipping and caring for a vegan kitchen explains why an oven thermometer is essential (ovens are likely to lie) and why a ricer might be a good addition to a "doomsday prep list."

While updating and transforming Appalachia's meat-heavy meals into tasty vegan fare requires some unfamiliar ingredients like aquafaba, used as a binder to replace eggs, and kala namak, a flavor-enhancing salt, the book's explanations and instructions for their use are clear and easy to follow. Palate-pleasing recipes for everyday meals, snacks, side dishes, desserts, and special events include Sorghum Spice Coffee Cake, Banana Pecan Waffles, Vegan Cream of Celery Soup, Fried Green Tomato Burgers, Cucumber Dill Dip, Creamy Tangy Coleslaw, Bread Machine Rosemary Bread, and Bourbon Pecan Pie.

*The Modern Mountain Cookbook* is a heartwarming cookbook that translates traditional Appalachian cuisine into vegan delights designed to appeal to all palates.

KRISTINE MORRIS (January / February 2025)

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