

FAMILY REUNION INSTITUTE'S

STICKY REUNION SITUATION

ARE REUNION MEALS GOING VEGAN?

October 2022

The Situation:

Every year, more and more of our family members are becoming vegan or vegetarians, and we want to include them in our meal planning. What's the best way to incorporate vegan and/or vegetarian options to our family reunion menus?

The Fix:



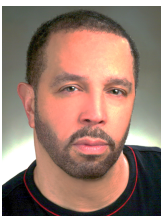
**Suzanne
Vargus Holloman**

More and more people are choosing diets that reflect health, religious, environmental, ethical, or other commitments. To avoid conflict at the reunion, ask about diet preferences on the registration form. If need be, follow-up with a phone call to ensure that you understand what foods accommodate the family member's nutrition needs. Don't ask the family members why they have chosen the diet as this may put them on the defensive. It's best for them to volunteer why they have made the choice on their own.

Like other sensitive aspects of the reunion, handle the incorporation of vegan/vegetarian or other food options with grace and love. Consider the following:

- Vegetarian/vegan meals shouldn't be difficult to order as most restaurants, hotels, and caterers provide them.
 - With a buffet, the vegetarian/vegan food options may be all gone by the time the vegan/vegetarian family members get to the buffet table. Prepare their plates in advance to ensure that there is sufficient food for them to eat.
 - Be discrete about the family member's choice. Certainly, it can be noted at the meal that there are vegetarian/vegan options available, but don't announce which family members follow this diet.
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The Fix:



Billy Vargus

As a vegetarian myself, I've had many a disappointing meal at various banquets. We usually get served some green beans and carrots. People should realize that in today's world there are so many more exciting options, especially Beyond Burgers or Impossible "meat" products.

There's also a difference between vegetarians and vegans and in an ideal world there will be choices for both. Vegans don't eat any animal products, and will probably be okay with the carrots and green beans, but vegetarians will eat cheese, which makes everything taste better. Vegetarians will also eat ice cream. (But again, both will eat and enjoy those Beyond and Impossible products made from plant protein.)

If you have options like those available, all of the plant-based eaters will feel included and cared for and grateful as a result.
