

FAMOUS CELEBRITIES WHO ARE VEGAN



There are a number of famous people who have chosen a vegan lifestyle. This involves consuming no animal products, but instead focusing on plants and their derivatives.

Quite a few celebrities follow the trend for health-conscious eating which has become popular among many stars of stage, screen and sports arenas.

Celebrity endorsements are a great way to make the general public aware of products, for commercial purposes. Advertisers know they have a huge impact on their fans. Veganism means changing your whole lifestyle and way of eating so some people may take some convincing to do it.

We all know we need to eat foods that are better for our health and if it takes a celebrity to encourage us to give it a try, that is a positive move. There are many health benefits associated with this diet which is why these celebrities chose to try a plant-based diet.

Al Gore chose the vegan diet after he filmed the documentary *An Inconvenient Truth*. He then realised that many negative aspects of his life were closely related to animal exploitation - such as global warming, rainforest destruction and air pollution (1)

By becoming vegan Al reduced his carbon footprint dramatically, whilst also making an impact on the lives of animals. Helping the planet is another reason why people choose the vegan lifestyle (2).

Choosing a vegan diet might not seem the obvious choice when you are a sportsman/woman. However, **Venus Williams** chose this path because of

health reasons. She did not feel that her body was able to function at its best when eating meat and fish. The auto-immune disease Sjögren's Syndrome was also causing her joints a great deal of pain.

Changing to a vegan diet meant that the joint pain lessened, so she could continue with her quest to be champion. She also noticed an improvement in her complexion too. So now her skin is glowing as well as her sporting performance. All thanks to veggies. (3)

Another very successful sports star, that loves fruit and vegetables, is **Lewis Hamilton**. He did not just choose this diet for himself but is also behind the plant-based burger chain, Neat Burger (4) This brings the vegan diet to members of the public that would normally choose meat based processed food. And what young man doesn't want to follow in the footsteps of World Champ Lewis Hamilton?

To spread the word further, the F1 driver is executive producer for the Netflix film The Game Changers. (5) This film focuses on how plant protein can be just as effective as meat, for elite athletes and those in the military. Other sportsmen featured are tennis player, **Novak Djokovic** and **Chris Paul** the basketball player. Chris says that this diet has helped him improve his game and feel better overall (6).

Novak suffers from a gluten intolerance and has found that a plant-based diet makes him feel much healthier. Taking bread, cereals and dairy out of his diet has helped keep him at the top of his game ever since (7).

And then there is **David Haye**, the boxer. He initially chose a vegan lifestyle to help him recover after he was injured fighting. He found one of the 'side effects' of the diet made his skin better and even cleared up his dandruff. The best bit was that his sleep improved so he had much more energy. This is a great plus point when you are a sportsman (8).

Alicia Silverstone isn't clueless when it comes to her diet. She knows what she likes and recognises the benefits of a vegan diet. She changed her eating habits due to her love of animals (9), but as a mother she has noticed other benefits. Both Alicia and her son are calmer so there are less tantrums in the Silverstone household. Alicia attributes the vegan diet to making her a more patient parent (10).

Spiderman actor and animal advocate, **Tobey Maguire** has been a vegan for over 2 decades. Before that he was vegetarian. Often people choose the vegan lifestyle but forget that animal products are used for clothing and footwear as well. Tobey refuses to allow any animal products in his home and even sent a car with leather seats back, whilst filming *The Great Gatsby* (11). On top of that he is a fierce campaigner promoting veganism in schools. Go Spidey! (12)

Passionate vegan Toby Maguire also managed to convince actress **Natalie Portman** to make the switch from vegetarian to vegan (13). She has taken that baton and really run with it, co-producing and narrating the Amazon Prime documentary, *Killing Animals* (14). She has been active on social media promoting this documentary (15) as well as cooking vegan dishes online. On top of that she has invested in a company using mushrooms to make plant-based leather. I wonder if Tobey Maguire was her first customer (16).

Jared Leto adopted the vegan lifestyle 20 years ago. That change in diet two decades ago, has helped him look much younger than he is and also gives him bags of energy for his daily workouts (17).

Rapper and Black Eyed Peas frontman **Will.i.am** swapped to the vegan lifestyle in 2018. That led to him losing 15lbs in weight and lowering his blood pressure and cholesterol. He often advocates the vegan lifestyle instead of medication on his Instagram account (18).

Celebrity endorsements don't come better than from a former U S President. **Bill Clinton** chose to adopt this way of eating after he was diagnosed with heart issues. He then started working with Dr Esselstyn who inspired him to go vegan to help improve his heart health (19). Not only that but he lost 20lbs so looked trim when he proudly gave his daughter Chelsea away, at her wedding. He is now very vocal about encouraging others to eat more plants and less animals! (20).

The word vegan was 'invented' in 1944 by **Donald Watson** (21). This was a long time before so-called celebrities posted photos of themselves on social media, eating plant-based foods for a cut of the profits. However, historically there were lots of other famous individuals who followed this way of eating. And not a selfie in sight! These animal-loving, plant-eating folk include mathematician **Pythagoras**, inventor **Leonardo da Vinci** and Frankenstein author **Mary Shelley** (22).

In the interest of fairness, it is worth mentioning that many celebrities have dipped their toes into veganism but for one reason or another have reverted back to either a vegetarian or pescatarian diet. These include **Miley Cyrus**

who followed the diet for 6 years (23). She still wears cruelty-free fashion though and has also launched a vegan range of Converse footwear (24).

Finally, chat show host Ellen Degeneres is mostly vegan but does admit to eating free-range eggs, from happy hens, and fish. She has probably been one of the most successful celebrities at encouraging the public to try a vegan diet. This is because she has millions of fans watching her show and following her on social media. Ellen is passionate about anti-hunting and has even bought a gorilla conservation centre in Rwanda (25).

With the help of all these celebrities maybe this planet and the animals that live on it aren't doomed after all!

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