

Vegan Raw Food Revolution

by stephanie • images ayu sekar



For years now Ubud has been a haven for vegans and raw food revolutionaries who want fresh healthy cuisine minus the meat and animal products. In fact we're absolutely blessed with an abundance of restaurants and cafes that strive to offer super nutritious plant-based dishes that not only good for you, but taste good too. Whether you've cut out animal products completely, or just want a spectacular meal sans meat, these are our top picks for stellar spots that are taking vegan and raw food to a whole new level.

MOKSA

How many places do you know of where you can sit down for a meal and gaze out at the exact spot where your food came from? Welcome to Moksa, a gorgeous vegan and raw food restaurant surrounded by expansive permaculture gardens, rice fields and subak system streams.

Moksa is the brainchild of I Made Janur and Chef I Made Runatha, both formerly from Fivements. When they set out to create a restaurant, they knew they wanted to do something different, something community-based, sustainable, and focused on living foods.

Approximately 50 to 70 per cent of the food used in the Moksa kitchen comes directly from their gardens, and each dish is plant-based, only slightly heated if at all, and expertly prepared by Chef Made in a variety of innovative and intensely flavourful ways.

Your meal could include dishes like the Jackfruit Tacos with meaty shredded and amply spiced jackfruit in a crispy corn shell with tomato salsa and coconut sour cream, or the Asam Laksa Noodle with barbecued seitan, char siew tofu and a plethora of crunchy veggies in a tangy and fiery broth.

The food at Moksa is cleverly created to bring the most out of the pure ingredients. However, unlike some other raw food places, the vibe here is extremely laid-back and utterly unpretentious. You won't find a 'healthier than thou' attitude, and chances are you'll be greeted by name after just one visit.

Made Janur says, "Eating is a personal choice, so we're not preaching. We're just a restaurant serving plant-based food." Chef Made Runatha echoes this sentiment and adds,



"The restaurant is just about sharing what we have, not all about making money. I really believe that this type of food can heal, and we want people who come here to be happy and healthy."

Puskesmas Ubud II, Gang Damai, Ubud
www.moksaubud.com

FRESH at TAKSU

Located on a quiet corner on the southern stretch of Jalan Goutama, Taksu consists of lovely terraces and pavilions spilling down the side of a jungle-clad ravine. Best known as a holistic healing hotspot for their rejuvenating spa sessions and yoga classes, they are also garnering rave reviews for Fresh, their newest raw food and vegan restaurant set in a tranquil garden.

The menu, created by Chef Arif, includes inspired creations made with organic produce sourced from Taksu's own gardens on site and small organic farms that they have partnered with. Each dish is artfully created using only vegan ingredients, and nothing is heated over 115 degrees Fahrenheit (46 degrees Celsius).

The culinary creations at Fresh include the Mini Lasagna piled high with vibrant layers of zucchini, sun-dried tomato marinara, almond pesto and citrus salad, the Avocado Tartare with crunchy peppers, fragrant coriander leaves and cashew cream cheese, and the Mini Tacos with baby romaine, walnut carnitas, cashew chipotle and organic heirloom tomatoes.

For those with a sweet tooth, Fresh offers a range of desserts and treats like the Kaffir Lime Tart with ginger coconut crumb and pina colada fruits and the Strawberry Cheesecake with cashew lime cream cheese, fresh strawberries and fruit coulis. You can also peruse the display case for different flavours of organic chocolate from the Ubud Raw Chocolate Factory.

Jalan Goutama Selatan, Ubud
www.taksuspa.com

GARDEN KAFE at THE YOGA BARN

The Yoga Barn has become an iconic institution in Ubud with all manner of yoga classes packing out pretty much all day, every day of the week. But what many people may not know is that the site is also home to a cute little garden cafe that serves up some mean living raw vegan food.

The setting here is picturesque with tables looking out over the gardens, terraced lawn, and the amphitheatre of The Yoga Barn. You'll find plenty of yoga peeps chilling out after their classes, as well as foodies looking for a healthy fix.

Settle in at one of the wooden tables under an umbrella and start with a Super Anti-Oxidant Shake or a Liver Detox Shot with carrot and turmeric. Then you have your choice of a Breakfast Bowl filled with nutritious ingredients like fresh fruit, oats and seeds, or if it's after 11am, an Organic Salad, Raw Coconut Green Curry or the Tricolour Soba Plate to name just a few options.

The Garden Kafe also specialises in Ayurvedic cuisine, which is associated with their Kush Ayurvedic Rejuvenation and Detox programs and can be customised for your unique body and mind type. Examples of their Ayurvedic dishes include the Red Lentil Dahl with whole wheat chapati and the hearty Kitcheree Mrdu stew with organic rice, split yellow lentils and a mild spice blend.

Jalan Raya Pengosekan, Ubud
www.theyogabarn.com/healingfoods

SAGE

Now to the Nyuh Kuning hood is Sage, an eclectic vegan restaurant where the vibe is contemporary and chic, yet still super cosy, and the food is a fabulous mash-up of different spices and flavours influenced by the owners' travels around the globe. The underlying concept is good, clean food made with local and organic products and prepared from scratch and by hand.

Step inside Sage and you enter a space with bright white walls, inviting wooden tables and cushioned benches next to huge circular windows. Soaring ceilings allow air to flow through and the massive windows let in plenty of natural light.

The menu features a fusion of unique flavours and cooking styles. Take for example the Tempeh Buffalo Wings made with crunchy corn-crusted tempeh served with a creamy vegan ranch and piquant buffalo sauce, or the Lonestar Sandwich with smoky marinated baked tofu topped with lettuce, sliced tomato, pickles and chipotle mayonnaise on homemade flatbread.

The veggie bowls and salads are also particularly good value, as you get a huge bowl teeming with fresh ingredients like baked purple sweet potatoes, steamed cauliflower, tofu, spinach and sautéed carrots. Be sure to check out their dessert board too for delish after-dinner treats.

Jalan Nyuh Bulan, Nyuh Kuning, Ubud
www.facebook.com/sagerestobali/

