



not request for a special meal, and those who change the flight or date of travel will have to put forth their request again. Also, if 'vegan' is not specified, vegetarians are offered a lacto-ovo-meal at times on international flights.

Twenty hours is the norm for advance notice, which is followed by airlines like Emirates, Cathay Pacific, Singapore Airlines, American Airlines, and China Airlines. On Emirates, meal requests within 24 hours of departure (including all departures from Dubai) will remain on request and will be supplied based on the availability and ability of the kitchen to supply it, said a spokesperson.

Despite this, Shankar Narayan, President of the Indian Vegan Society, admits to mixed feelings when it comes to international travel. "I have travelled by Emirates, Malaysian Airlines, Air Asia, Ryannair, Oman Air, Gulf Air, etc. Airlines serving on Indian sectors provide lacto-veg meals but those not serving Indian sectors rarely give vegetarian options, let alone serving vegan food." For Jayasimha, the trouble is most found in low-cost airlines. "They sell a set meal and they typically don't have a vegan option," he says.

Dr Shah also agrees that most vegetarian meals on Indian flights tend to be dairy items. "There will be a main meal, which will have paneer or cream. The raita will have curd and the dessert is likely to be a milk sweet." This is why Nandini, who works with an NGO in Bangalore, carries her own food on plane journeys. "I usually eat before going to the airport and once I have landed, on reaching home. Otherwise, I carry my own food. I have never asked an airline to arrange a vegan meal because I have seen that vegetarian menus have paneer and mayonnaise. I don't think there is a point in asking because this is a plane, and not a restaurant where they can customise the food."

Some might agree with the argument that it is not easy to create dishes that do not have dairy products or derivatives, meat, fish, fowl, eggs, or honey. But Dr Shah says it is simple. "Daal Subzi and Roti or Rice for a meal and for snacks, Idli, Dosa, Uttapam, Upma, Samosa, Ragda Patties, and Puri Bhajji – the choices are endless." ☀

Fresh Feasts Onboard

Spicejet recently announced its new all-day Fresh Feast menu, which is available on select flights. The Fresh Feast meal, priced at ₹200, includes either Bhajji/Chicken Keema with Pao, Chicken/Paneer Tikka Latpata with Kulcha, Chicken/Vegetable Manchurian and Vegetable Fried Rice, or Chicken/Vegetable Biryani with



Mirchi ka Salan/tempered Tur Daal and Dahi, along with the dessert of the day and a choice of beverage.

The Fresh Feasts menu is available after 10:00 am while the Morning Delights menu can be availed before 10:00 am. The vegetarian version of the latter, priced at ₹200, includes Idli and Sambar, Upma, Vegetable Croquette, fresh fruit appetiser and a choice of beverage, and Moong Dal Chilla with Stuffed Paneer Bhurji, Mixed Vegetable Stew, Poha, fresh fruit appetiser and a choice of beverage. The non-vegetarian menu includes Egg Akuri, Grilled Chicken Sausage with tomato sauce, Croissant, Vegetable Croquette, fresh fruit appetiser and a choice of beverage, or Boiled Eggs with barbeque sauce, Corn Tikki, Hash Brown Potato, Croissant, fresh fruit appetiser and a choice of beverage.

For a discounted price, sandwiches and snacks can be ordered while booking tickets.

