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with Claudia Emanuel

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Veganism in Bangalore, India

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When I decided to come to India I knew my veganism would be challenged in ways that would frustrate and challenge me. Ancient Vedic scriptures encouraged vegetarianism. One scripture says, “There is no sin in eating meat... but abstention brings great rewards.” However, this does not take dairy out of the equation. In general, India is a fantastic destination for vegetarians, but kind of a nightmare for vegans.

I have received some puzzling expressions from Indians when I’ve tried to ask for a dish without any dairy in it. If not actual milk, ghee (clarified butter) is almost always present in many of the dishes that I have come across. While on a tour in the Indian countryside this past weekend, we stopped for breakfast and to my disdain, I couldn’t even order a black coffee because only ready-prepared, sweet, milky coffee was on offer.

I am not completely disheartened though. During my time in Bangalore I have discovered the work of some amazing people. Last weekend I attended a seminar, Peas vs Pills, hosted by [SHARAN](#), an educational organization with talks and lectures on the health benefits of a plant based diet. This seminar is SHARAN’s oldest seminar and is presented by Dr Nandita Shah, a registered medical doctor, specialized in homeopathy. The seminar had a natural, holistic approach and was extremely informative in regards to how we can use food to prevent disease and heal our bodies.



The seminar was held at [Paradigm Shift](#), here in Bangalore, and a restaurant called [Carrots](#) did the catering. Fortunately for me, this enabled me to kill two birds with one stone as both Paradigm Shift and Carrots promote veganism in Bangalore. Carrots provided some divine, vegan indian food – with many dishes I had never tried before! I will definitely be going back to these restaurants to eat more delicious food.



The day after Peas vs Pills, SHARAN hosted a seminar, which I did not attend, about reversing diabetes and hypertension through diet and lifestyle. Both seminars were well attended, which just goes to show that veganism is definitely a growing point of interest in Bangalore and in India.

Having a group of friends to support and encourage you when you make the transition to a vegan diet is always a nice thing to have. I recommend [Vegan Bengaluru](#) if you're interested to connect with fellow vegans in Bangalore – they organise a monthly potluck in Cubbon Park!

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