Mother's Milks

Mina Fuhr

A mystic vegan cookbook
for healing your relationship to food

in SENEGAL
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WELCOME TO THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SUBSTITUTIONS !

Creativity can come from sparsity. The best ideas have come to me, when I opened my fridge in despair to find foods that I never thought would form a proper meal. These meals made from leftovers have a fresh air of unpredictability and that's what I like about them. Senegal is abundant in fruits, vegetables and thanks to the ethnic stores, we also have a lot of dry pantry standards that are not available in other African countries. Just because you don't have the exact same ingredients you would have in the West, it's not a reason to give up. This handbook not only tells you exactly how to make all 24 recipes from "Mother's Milks" in Senegal,but gives also some general hints on how to live successfully as a Galsen-veggie.

Although I have written the biggest chunk of "Mother's Milks" in Senegal, it wasn't until I have returned to Germany that I really started to work on the recipes. Some recipes were born in Dakar, but most of them were concocted in my kitchen in Berlin, where I had a wide range of ingredients available and was working with a more global audience in mind. However it's time I responded to the request for a Senegalese substitution handbook. Dakar has really become my home

and I want this book to make sense here on all levels.

I was actually positively surprised about how easy it was to write this handbook because A) there wasn't all that much to sub B) nothing to sub at all or C) Senegal has really cool ingredients that are fun to play with. Nevertheless, some recipes were either too Japanese or too Germanic (I guess my blood ancestors came through strongly in those moments of my writing) that it wasn't worth substituting the ingredients. Better I offer a similar dish with a different take, which would still make sense in the frame of the entire book.

Being vegan in Dakar is not always easy but it's not rocket science either. Out of fairness I have to say that I'm not the strictest vegan when I'm in this part of the world. I eat Thieb bu Dienne minus the fish and from time to time I eat some pizza with a little cheese. If all other options, including pizza without any cheese, just seem to be too damn life-negating, I go there. Most of the time however I'm happy that I can cook my meals and have access to lots of seasonal fruit. I look at what I have and it's pretty darn amazing.

Before I go into the recipes one by one, here are a few basics to cover, that will appear over and over again.

sweeteners

I wrote a whole section about these in the main book (see page 124). Sometimes I used maple syrup then again, rice syrup or agave. Maple syrup is available in Dakar, but feels really artificial to use in this climate. I would go for the non-vegan option in this case. Honey from Casamance. Admitted the bees work hard on this but it feels like the most organic solution for sweetening something in Senegal. The taste is quite strong, which means it's an excellent gateway to reconnect to the flowers and the earth where it came from.

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salt

This is another topic I dedicated a section to (see page 124). Senegal is surrounded by the ocean, so at markets you can get local sea salt. I'd say that's your best bet!

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nutritional yeast

This flaky colony of yest gives vegan cheeses it's nutty, cheesy flavor... but no big deal if you don't have any. You can simply omit it, or add a little bit more garlic and or onion powder. If you feel very adventurous, you can try to play with netetou. Netetou

is a fermented bean (niebe) product, that gives Mafe it's funky, yet oh-so irresistible flavor and smell. It's the bacteria and the process of decomposition that gives nutritional yeast, netetou, miso and of course cheese the depth of its flavors. Worth trying.

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vanilla pod

This magic bean is available here but just expensive. You can always sub for vanilla essence or some vanilla sugar. It's not as decadent but much cheaper and who is to judge.

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agar-agar

Agar-agar is derived from algae and is basically vegan gelatin. I use it quite often in raw cake and mousse recipes since it gives it some more form. Many vegan cakes though don't call for this ingredient, and instead just make the mixture thicker (less liquid content) or serve it colder. So omitting it is perfectly fine and if you happen to have some around, lucky you ~

In my opinion, cooking is not an absolute art, but it thrives on trial & error, curiosity and a healthy sense of recklessness. Don’t forget to infuse your meals with love for you and those you cook for and I wish you happy substitutions and beguee <3

1. BREATHING BUCKWHEAT BREAKFAST

Normal rolled oats work just as well for this breakfast dish. Fennel is a little hard to come around here. You can sub celery for fennel if you want to keep the funky encounter of fruit and vegetable of simple switch it our for sweat pears. And don't mourn the lack of Peruvian Maca powder in Senegal, we are blessed with our own superfood: Bouye. So just mix some of the powder into the porridge and sprinkle on top.

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2. EARTH PIE

Eating "Earth Pie" on the mother continent, what a treat! I see black sesame sometimes, but you can substitute for white sesame as well, which is an excellent source of minerals. The nutritional yeast gives everything a cheesy flavor, but is not a crucial part in the recipe. You can double the onion powder and add a 1tsp of garlic powder or you can be very courageous and add a little nettetou. If you find coconut oil hard to come by or too expensive here, just add the same amount of coconut milk.

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3. HUMMUS RESURRECTED

Senegal friendly <3
Tip: Sprouting here can be tricky, especially when it gets warmer. Wash your chickpeas and spouts 2 to even 3 times per day to assure it doesn't start to smell funky.

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4. GET UP AND GOO

Although chia seeds are available in specialty stores, I wanted to add a more local breakfast/snack pudding option here:

TAMARIND & PAPAYA PUDDING

1/4 c of tamarind
1/2 c of orange juice (fresh or bought)
1 c papaya
1 large ripe banana
1/2 tsp cinnamon

Instructions: Soak the tamarind overnight in the orange juice. In the morning sieve the orange juice to get rid of pulp and seeds.

Blend everything in a blender and serve.

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5. PRINCESS KIMCHI

Senegal friendly <3
Tip: If you would like to try the recipe with other fruits, opt for ones with some consistency like pears, kiwi or mangoes in a not fully ripe stage. Bananas and papayas will just go mushy and are too sweet to be paired with the pungent taste of the kimchi spices.

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6. CHOCO- YES! SHAKE

It's always good to try new foods and expand your food horizon, but if you don't have Brazil nuts, then you just use good old cashews, which are pretty abundant here. Raw cacao has more nutrition but the cocoa powder you can buy here (the normal one for making hot cocoa without any sugar) has a deeper more chocolaty flavor. Enjoy <3

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7. SCREAMING HERB ROLLS

I have not yet seen any sprouts being sold in Dakar. They are easy to make at home, so maybe you want to smuggle some seeds on your next trip overseas. But for now, you can simply add some lettuce or cucumber to up the greenness on your summer rolls. The almond butter can of course be subbed for peanut butter (tiga-dege). You can omit the miso and simply add a little more soy sauce instead. Herbs are cheap and abundant here, so can't complain about that!

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8. OFFERICE BALLS

Senegal friendly <3
Tip: Point of this recipe was to make it really rich in Ojas, which is an aspect of vitality in Ayurvedic medicine. Since coconut is abundant here, you can add a tablespoon of coconut to the rice when you cook it and that will make these rice balls even more life-affirming.

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9. APHRODITE'S MAFE

It's Mafe, of course you can make it here ;) The local millet here tho has quite a strong taste and won't take on the flavor of the bissap (hibiscus) as well as the western millet. But you can use another Senegalese superfood instead: Fonio.

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10. PEACE OF ZEN CAKE

This one is really exotic as in it has lots of Japanese ingredients and it just doesn't feel right to try and attempt to recreate this here. So instead I present the "Peace of Sufi Cake" with cafe touba :)

PEACE OF SUFI CAKE

crust

3/4 c almonds
3 dates
pinch of salt

filling

1/2 c cashews (soaked)
1/2 c strong cafe touba
1 ripe banana
1/4c liquid sweetener
1tbsp lime juice
1/3 packet of vanilla sugar

Instructions: Follow the instructions of the cake recipe in the book omitting the steps for the agar-agar. Optionally decorate with some slices of banana or cocoa powder.

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11.CHILLY COMPASSION FRUIT

Senegal friendly <3

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12. LAKSHMI COINS

Cauliflower is a great substitute for the lotus root. Almond meal is easy to make: Put in a dry food processor and pulse till you get a rough flour-like consistency. Top off

with some chopped green onions. Lakshmi is everywhere ;)

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13. FRACTAL UNRECIPE

Did I say it's an UNrecipe? This is all about encouraging you to see the beauty in plant based foods. So cut sideways through apples, kiwis, cucumbers, tomatoes… whatever you find and fall in love all over again.

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14. STRAAAAWBERRY MOUSSE

Easy: Use all almonds as opposed to 1/2 almond & 1/2 macadamia in the crust. Grains of paradise, also called Guinean pepper or west African pepper, that which makes cafe tuba spicy, is a common ingredient in love spells… that's why I added it to this recipe. It's more of a witch-thing than a taste-thing ;) You can find it in markets here. You can simply omit the agar-agar and simple serve it when it's really cold, that way it holds its shape, or don't care about the shape… it tastes just as good.

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15. DOUBLE BABY SALAD

I see fresh pomegranate from time to time, but it's not a regular on the market here. You can try pomegranate syrup (2 tbsp) which is a common ingredient in Middle Eastern dishes and readily available here. The glass noodles made out of mung beans work just as well as rice noodles. To sub the baby red chard leaves you can opt for some sweet potato leaves, which are super nutritious and yummy raw.

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16. KITCHARI DOODLE DO

Frozen raspberries are available and work well for this recipe, but you can play around with oranges or pineapple as well. Fruits with a high acidic content work best here to counter the grounding effects of the kitchari.

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17. IT'S ALL GOOD ELIXIR

Another berry that's playing hard to get in Senegal ;) Again, frozen works perfectly well or if you like, bananas or pears are quite calming as well. For a pinch of lavender, you can ask me, I always have lots on hand <3 or you can open up the bag of chamomile tea and add some of that as the magical ingredient to put you into a "it's all good" coma.

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18. NOW BITES

This recipe is not really meant to be replicated. So I'll give you the recipes for the energy balls I was selling at a farmers market to keep people munching and hovering around my table ;)

PEANUT & GINGER

1/2 c peanut meal
1/2 c coconut flakes
2 tbsp peanut butter
2 tsp crushed crystallized ginger 6 dates
2tbsp honey
pinch of salt

CASHEW & BOUYE

1/2 c cashew meal
1/2 c coconut flakes
1/2 c bouye powder
2 tbsp honey
6 dates
zest of 1/2 lime

Instructions: Put everything in a food processor and mix well until the mixture starts to stick together. Take a heaping tablespoon full of the mixture and form balls.

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19. THIS IS HOW I ROLL

Since this is another Japanese inspired burrito recipe and all the far-eastern ingredients are mostly impossible to come by, I'll untwist the Japanese twist and bring it back to a more conventional Mexican flavor.

lime rice with niebe

3/4 c rice
1/4 c niebe (Senegalese beans)
2 c water
pinch of salt
2 tbsp lime juice

salsa

1 tomato
2 green onions
handful of cilantro
1 tbsp olive oil
1 tbsp lime juice
tiny bit of the african pepper

guacamole

1 avocado
1/4 onion
1 clove of garlic
handful of coriander
2 tbsp of lime juice
1/4 tsp cumin
1/4tsp cayenne pepper

vegan-cheese
1/4c cashews
1/4c zucchini
1 tsp netetou
1/2 tsp garlic powder
1/2 tsp onion powder
3 tbsp lime juice
pinch of salt

for serving
4 flour tortillas
fresh cut lettuce

Instructions: For the lime rice, soak the rice with niebe in water for 2h, then cook with a pinch of salt covered until done. Mix in the lime juice while still warm. Prepare guacamole, cheese and salsa as instructed in the book. Serve with some fresh lettuce.

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20. HARMONY SWEET AND SOUR

Pine nuts are expensive everywhere and especially here. You can always switch them for cashews. Asparagus is available in a jar, but I'd choose a fresh head of cauliflower over anything preserved. The peanut oil can be subbed for a neutral sunflower oil or sesame seed oil.

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21. MARRIED BY MARINATION PIZZA

This is actually a Senegal-born recipe. It was originally made with a whole wheat flour I found here and without the nutritional yeast. The lack of nutritional yeast gives the basil cream a less nutty flavor, which makes the freshness of the basil and the lemon come through stronger… which is never a bad thing ;)

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22. I AM GARDEN TARTE

… and another recipe born in Senegal! You can't be picky; take any mushrooms, probably champignons, and dish it up.

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23. LUSTY ALMOND MILK

Senegal friendly <3
Tip: You can try the same with soaking dried coconuts and of course cashews.

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24. FLIRTY FERTILITY COOKIES

This recipe has very Central European ingredients, which I will not attempt to substitute here. Instead I'm bringing you a super easy to make sandwich type cookie, made with more local ingredients:

COCONUT–DATE DOUBLE-DECKER

cookie

1 c coconut flakes

1/2 c dates

filling

any local jam you can find: corrosol, bissap, mango...

Instructions: Heat the oven to 350 and place parchment paper on a baking sheet. Blend coconut flakes and dates in a food processor until they start to come together. Take 1 tablespoon fulls of the mix, roll out a ball and then flatten them out to form a cookie. Bake cookies for 10min or until golden brown. Once cooled, take some of your favorite jam and sandwich it between two layers of coconut cookie.

AND THAT WAS THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SUBSTITUTIONS !

24 fun, vegan recipes made possible in Senegal. Make sure to stay playful and keep on discovering.

I’m here if you need my help : minafuhr@gmail.com or you can come by the studio and have a post-yoga bliss tea with me and chat about all things vegan and witchy ;)

Thanks for considering a plant-based life style and I wish you all the best for your journey <3

xxx
Mina

About Mina Fuhr:

Mina (Berlin/Dakar) is a shapeshifter and medicine woman who shares her gifts of healing through yoga, dance, body work and vegan food. She is fascinated by the body in its physical and subtle form, continuously looking for ways to expand her knowledge and skill without being bound to one profession or realm. She is the writer of “Mother’s Milks - A mystic vegan cookbook for healing your relationship to food.” and CEW (Chief Executive Witch) at her own yoga studio Prism Yoga Dakar in Senegal.

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