

HOW TO

Eat Like an NBA Star

by **ARUKA SANCHIR**

HE'S 6'11, an Olympic gold medalist, and he runs completely on plants—particularly mushrooms and food-truck burgers. DeAndre Jordan, the infectiously positive, 31-year-old All-Star center of the Brooklyn Nets, is making a name for himself in the vegan world. An outspoken investor of Beyond Meat, Jordan became an instant fan-favorite after whipping up vegan chocolate-banana pancakes and Bloody Marys in a *Bon Appétit* cooking video that racked up more than 3.8 million views. But VegNews wanted to know more. So we sat down with Jordan for some rapid-fire questions to get the scoop on his vegan story, living life as a plant-powered professional athlete, and that pesky protein question.

How long have you been vegan?

For about two years now.

And what was your motivation?

It started with becoming more aware and caring about my impact on the planet. I believe in total mind, body, and environmental wellness, so it was a natural step on my path to living a more mindful life.

Did you have any apprehensions about making the switch?

No, I was excited for it! I was only nervous about the things I wasn't educated about, like stereotypes about not being able to get enough protein.

And now that you've done it, what's been the best thing about going plant-based?

Two things: I love the way I feel and the impact I am having on the environment.

What has been the most difficult?



DeAndre in three words? Basketball, Brooklyn, and plant-based burgers.

Hotels. Especially if you're looking for anything on the breakfast menu. I have to get very creative at hotels and am often limited to just side dishes.

What is one thing that has surprised you?

Honestly, I didn't realize just how good I would feel—I have way more energy and sleep better and deeper. I literally feel cleaner and more fit in a way that I didn't when I ate meat.

What about food-wise? Any new things you love?

I really love mushrooms now. There are so many different ways to prepare them and so many different kinds that really have amazing textures and flavors.

Before going vegan, what was your all-time favorite thing to eat?

I've always been a burger guy. I loved a good burger.

Have you found a good vegan version?

Absolutely—Beyond Burger is my favorite. I actually created my own special version with the Vurger Guyz

DeAndre Jordan went vegan in 2018 and has never looked back.



food truck in Los Angeles.

Really? Tell us about that.

It's the DJ Special—two Beyond Meat patties topped with lettuce, tomato, onions, vegan cheese, avocado, and a special sauce. Plus the special ingredient: oyster mushrooms.

Speaking of LA, you played there for the Clippers for 10 years but are now living in New York. What are you liking about your new home?

New York's great. I love the energy of the city and the people. It's so diverse. And there are so many vegan places that are open late!

And how has being vegan affected your game?

Because of the amount of stress we put on our bodies, it's really important that we have the proper foods to help us with recovery. Being plant-based has actually given me an advantage in this area, and I'm fortunate enough to have a personal chef who keeps my nutrition on track.

So between that and the Beyond Burgers, we're guessing you don't have to worry anymore about protein, right?

Right! Most people don't realize that eating a plant-based diet allows you to get the best source of protein. Animal products are secondary proteins because the animals get their protein from plants. So I have no problem getting enough. **VN**

Aruka Sanchir is an Assistant Editor at VegNews and is already a big fan of the DJ Special at Vurger Guyz.

DJ's Favorite Things

What does a vegan NBA player eat when not shooting hoops or scrimmaging with teammates? VegNews found out.



BREAKFAST

Dunkin' Beyond Sausage breakfast sandwich, no egg or cheese



LUNCH + DINNER

Pasta and salad



DINING OUT

Nic's on Beverly in Los Angeles and P.S. Kitchen in New York City

SNACK

From The Ground Up Cauliflower Pretzels



DESSERT

Uncle Eddie's Chocolate Chip Cookies with Walnuts