



NOW FIND VEGETARIAN'S

A Taste of Spring

*A COMPLETE VEGETARIAN MENU FOR ALL
YOUR ENTERTAINING NEEDS*



Now Find Vegetarian's **A Taste of Spring** A Complete Vegetarian Menu For All Your Entertaining Needs

by Jessica MacDonald Lee and Renée Lumbreras

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We are not physicians, nutritionists or dietitians. The recipes and information contained in this e-book are based on and from our own personal experiences.

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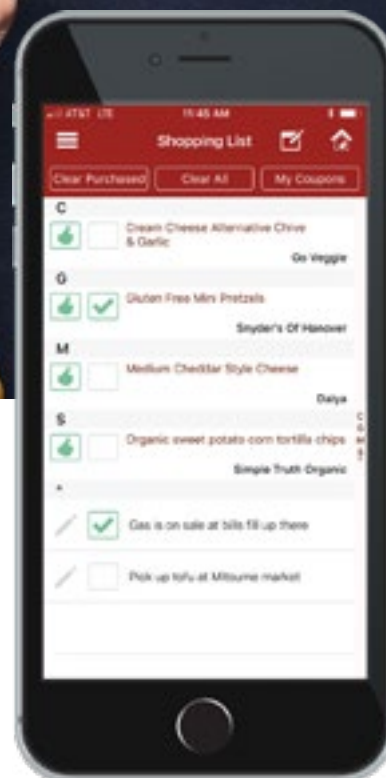
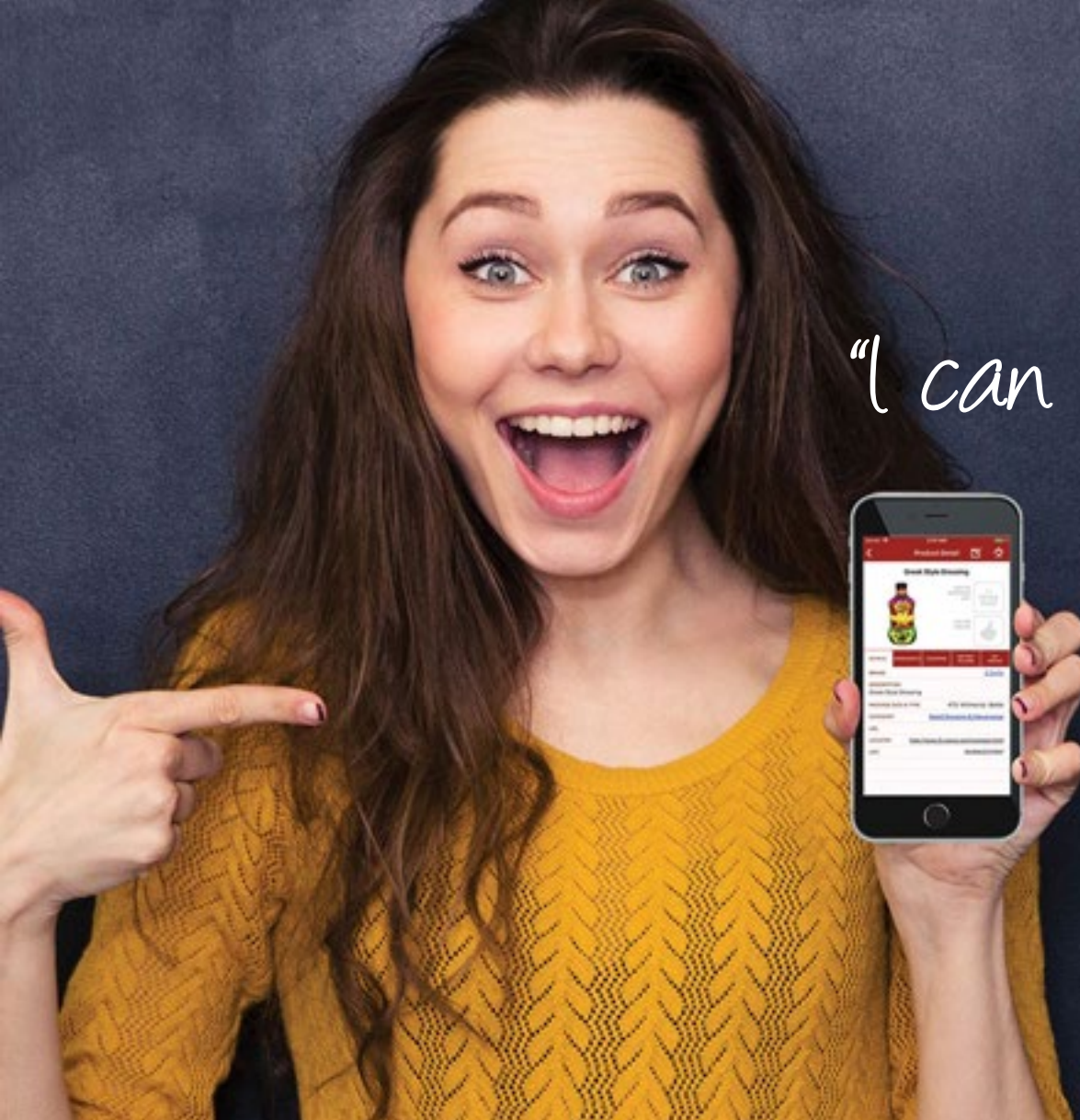
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ISBN Number: 978-0-9982083-4-3

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Introduction

Spring is so close that we can almost taste it. While some parts of our country are already warm and lovely, sadly where we live, it is still cold and dreary. We cling to the hope that as the days get longer, the warmth of the sun accompanied by blue skies and green grass will be here soon.

As we wait for Spring's arrival, we plan our gardens, shop for new clothes and test new recipes that are better suited for warm weather. On one particularly gray and snowy day, we were sitting around complaining that we had not seen the sun in days. Of course, as we always do, we started talking about food. Spring food or to be more exact, all the dishes that would be perfect to serve at our upcoming family celebrations.

That day led to the creation of this e-book. Perfect for holidays, weekend entertaining, or an amazing week night meal, many of the beautiful dishes that are included are filled with fresh vegetables and fruits. Most of them are very simple to make and some require no cooking or baking at all.

There are so many reasons to celebrate during the Spring season and all celebrations need food. Use our recipes to create a delightful, vegetarian meal for a crowd from start to finish. Or use our recipes individually, to take along to a party or for a delicious weeknight dish.

The recipes in this e-book were designed to feed 10-12 people. If you have a smaller gathering, you can simply cut them in half, or if you are expecting a larger crowd, you can double them.

It is all up to you. Take our recipes and add your own unique touch.

Happy Spring!

Crudité Cups

For the best results, select the freshest vegetables you can find. Feel free to substitute your favorite, in-season vegetables. We do not recommend preparing this dish any more than a few hours in advance.



INGREDIENTS

12 carrots
12 asparagus stalks
12 celery stalks

60 cherry or grape tomatoes
60 sugar snap peas
1.5 cups salad dressing of your choice
– bamboo skewers (Different size bamboo skewers can be found in your local grocery store near the toothpicks.)

Makes: 12 servings
Prep Time: 20 minutes

DIRECTIONS

1. Clean all the vegetables and if desired, peel the carrots.
2. Slice carrots length wise into thirds or quarters.
3. Cut vegetables to size according to your cup size.
4. Spear sugar snap peas and tomatoes onto bamboo skewers.
5. Pour 2 tablespoon of salad dressing into the bottom of each cup.
6. Arrange prepped vegetables in glasses.
7. Refrigerate until needed that day.

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Caramelized Onion and Pear Tartelettes

If your puff pastry is still frozen, place it on the countertop to defrost, about 20 – 30 minutes. Once it is defrosted, return the pastry to the refrigerator until you are ready to use it.



INGREDIENTS

2 boxes	frozen puff pastry, thawed and refrigerated	2 tsp	dried thyme
2 large	anjou pears	3 cups	swiss or havarti cheese, grated
2 large	sweet onions	8 oz	cream cheese, room temperature
2 Tbsp	unsalted butter	1 tsp	dried mustard
1 Tbsp	water	1 tsp	dried oregano
		1 tsp	black pepper

Makes: About 4 dozen
Prep Time: 30 minutes
Cook Time: 13 minutes
Passive Time: 30 minutes – for dough to defrost

ONIONS AND PEARS

1. Peel and thinly slice onions and pears.
2. In a large pan, melt butter over medium heat.
3. Add onions and pears to pan. Turn heat up to high.
4. Stir onions and pears continuously for five minutes, then add water and carefully scrape pan to release browned bits off the bottom of the pan.
5. Reduce heat to medium and stir occasionally, allow pears and onions to caramelize until they are golden to dark brown – about 10 minutes. Stir in dried thyme.
6. Remove from heat and set aside.

CHEESE TOPPING

1. Grate Swiss or Havarti cheese.
2. In a bowl, combine grated cheese with room temperature cream cheese, mixing until well combined. Plastic glove covered hands are the best tool for this job.
3. Add dried mustard, oregano and black pepper to the cheese and mix until well combined. Again, plastic glove covered hands work best here.
4. Measure out 1 teaspoon of cheese at a time and flatten into coin shaped discs, about the size of a quarter. When finished, you will have about 48 discs.

PUFF PASTRY

1. Preheat oven to 400°.
2. Work with only one section of puff pastry at a time. You want the pastry to be cold when it goes into the oven. Gently even out the pastry with a rolling pin. Do not press down hard, or the pastry will not puff correctly.
3. Cut out each sheet of puff pastry into 12 even squares or 2" circles.
4. Place on a silicone mat or parchment paper covered baking sheet. If using parchment paper, make sure that your paper is heat rated for over 400°.
5. Bake the plain puff pastry, until it has puffed and light golden brown, about 7-8 minutes. Reduce heat to 375°.

ASSEMBLY

1. Remove pastry from the oven and carefully place a cheese circle on the center of each pastry and then top with ½ tsp of the onion pear mix.
2. Return tartelettes to the oven and bake until golden brown and cheese has melted, about 3-5 minutes.
3. Remove from oven, allow to cool for 5 minutes and then serve.

Grapefruit Salad with Champagne Vinaigrette



SALAD

6-8 cups	arugula
¼ cup	radicchio
1	shallot, finely diced (reserve one tablespoon for vinaigrette.)
1 small	red grapefruit
¼ cup	walnuts (optional)
¼ cup	blue cheese (optional)
3 Tbsp	black sesame seeds (optional)

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Servings: 10-12

VINAIGRETTE

1 Tbsp	shallot (reserved from the salad)
1 Tbsp	minced garlic
¼ cup	champagne vinegar
½	lemon, juiced
½ cup	olive oil
3 Tbsp	honey
¾ tsp	salt
½ tsp	pepper
¼ tsp	cayenne pepper

DIRECTIONS

1. In a salad spinner or a strainer wash and strain the arugula and place in a large mixing bowl.
2. Slice the radicchio into thin slices and add to the arugula.
3. Finely dice the shallot (reserve 1 tablespoon diced shallot for the vinaigrette) and add to the salad.
4. Use a sharp knife to peel the grapefruit and be sure to remove all the membranes. Cut out the natural sections of the grapefruit and slice into thirds. Add grapefruit to the salad.
5. Using tongs mix the salad together to incorporate all the ingredients.
6. You can add the vinaigrette to the salad now or serve separately. I typically add about ½ cup of the dressing and mix the salad prior to serving.
7. Add the salad to the serving bowl(s) and sprinkle the walnuts, blue cheese and sesame seeds on the top of the serving bowl(s).

VINAIGRETTE

1. In a small bowl add all of the ingredients and whisk well. Pour dressing into a cruet or dressing bottle, if desired.

Lasagna with Béchamel Sauce

This lasagna recipe is broken down into four separate sections for ease of use.

It is not a complicated recipe, but it does have quite a few steps.

If possible, make the cheese blend and the vegetable mix the day before and refrigerate in airtight containers for easy lasagna assembly the next day.

The béchamel needs to be made the same day as the lasagna.



LASAGNA CHEESE BLEND

½ lb.	ricotta cheese	1 large	egg
1 cup	grated parmesan cheese	1 tsp	salt
¼ cup	pesto sauce (omit if using marinara sauce in lasagna)	1 tsp	Italian Herb Spice Blend
		4 large	basil leaves, chopped

Prep time: 5 minutes

DIRECTIONS

1. Place all ingredients in a large mixing bowl and mix until well combined. If using marinara sauce in your lasagna, do not use pesto in your cheese blend.
2. Set aside or if making ahead, refrigerate in an airtight container.

LASAGNA VEGETABLE MIX

3 Tbsp	olive oil	1 cup	roasted red pepper, drained and finely diced
2	leeks, white part only, finely diced		
1 medium	zucchini, diced into uniform 1" pieces	6 cups	spinach, washed and strained, roughly chopped
2-3	yellow squash, diced into uniform 1" pieces	1 tsp	Italian Herb Spice Blend
		1 tsp	salt

Prep time: 20 minutes

Cook time: 25 minutes

Passive time: 10 minutes

DIRECTIONS

1. Heat the olive oil in a large Dutch oven or heavy bottomed sauté pan.
2. Add the leeks and cook for 5 minutes.
3. Add the zucchini and squash. Cook for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
4. Add the spinach and cook down, about ten minutes.
5. Add the remaining ingredients and stir well. Cook for an additional 5 minutes.
6. Remove from heat and pour all ingredients into a large strainer on top of a large bowl. Let sit in the strainer for about 10 minutes to make sure to remove as much liquid as possible.
7. Set aside, or if making ahead let cool, then refrigerate in an airtight container.

Shortcuts and Substitutions: You can substitute 4 cups of homemade or purchased marinara sauce for the béchamel sauce in this lasagna.

If using marinara sauce, simply replace the steps that include béchamel with the marinara sauce.



We joke about how careful we are when buying lasagna noodles, from selection to check-out. We recommend that you select a quality brand for the best results.

For me, I prefer De Boles gluten free lasagna because they hold up really well and are sturdy enough to handle spreading the cheese directly onto them.

Gently shake the box to make sure that the noodles are not broken and handle them with care. Ask for them to be bagged separately or go through self-check-out to avoid any damage.

LASAGNA BÉCHAMEL SAUCE

¼ cup	butter	3 cups	milk, room temperature
½ cup	unbleached flour (If gluten free, use all-purpose gluten free flour mix without xanthan gum.)	4-5	garlic cloves, finely diced

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 1 hour

DIRECTIONS

1. Melt butter in a large Dutch oven or heavy bottomed sauce pan. You want the butter to be melted but not scorching hot. If necessary, remove from heat for a minute to allow to cool down slightly.
2. Using a small, hand held wire mesh strainer, slowly add the flour by sifting through the strainer and tapping it on the side of the pan, adding it slowly to the melted butter, whisking constantly. Add a little at a time to make sure there are no lumps.
3. Continue whisking until all the flour has been incorporated. Cook on low heat, whisking constantly for 5 minutes to cook out the taste of the flour. The roux should be a pale yellow color. When finished remove the roux from the heat for a few minutes to allow to cool slightly. You need to be sure the milk is room temperature. Adding cold milk to a hot roux will result in a lumpy sauce. They need to be relatively the same temperature when you add them together.
4. To add the milk, slowly pour a small amount into the roux whisking vigorously to avoid lumps. Continue to add the milk slowly whisking constantly until all the milk is incorporated.
5. Add the garlic, parmesan cheese, salt and pepper. Stir well.
6. Simmer on low heat for 50 minutes, stirring occasionally.
7. Set aside for lasagna assembly.

LASAGNA

1 lb. mozzarella cheese, pre-cut or cut into thin slices
1 ½ boxes lasagna noodles, no boil (If gluten free, use gluten free, no boil lasagna noodles.)

1 cup parmesan cheese, grated
1 recipe cheese blend
1 recipe vegetable mix
1 recipe béchamel sauce or
4 cups marinara sauce

Prep time: 30 minutes

Cook Time: 1 hour

Passive Time: 15 minutes

DIRECTIONS

1. In a 9x13 pan spray the bottom with non-stick spray, or coat bottom of pan with a very thin layer of sauce.
2. Using a small rubber spatula, smear each lasagna noodle with a layer of the cheese blend mix and lay on the bottom of the pan. The noodles should not overlap but sit snugly next to each other. You may have to break a noodle in half for the space left at the end of the pan.
3. Scoop a thin layer of the vegetable mix over the noodles.
4. Place a layer of mozzarella slices over the vegetable mix. The mozzarella is not going to cover the entire layer, so try to space them out evenly over the layer. I used 8 pieces per layer about 2 inches apart.
5. Add a thin layer of the béchamel sauce over the layer and repeat the process.
6. You should wind up with 3 layers of noodles, vegetables and cheese blend.
7. For the top layer, take the last of the cheese blend and smear over the noodles. Add the last of the mozzarella slices and cover with the remaining béchamel sauce. Sprinkle the parmesan cheese over the top.
8. Cover the lasagna pan in aluminum foil and bake for 50 minutes until bubbly.
9. During the last 10 minutes, remove the aluminum foil to bake the top.
10. Remove from oven and let rest 15 minutes before serving. This is an important step. It allows the lasagna to set so when you cut into it, it holds together.

If you want to be sure you have enough for each layer divide the vegetable mix into three separate servings, one for each layer. You will need four equal servings of the béchamel sauce, mozzarella and the cheese blend.

Glazed Carrots



INGREDIENTS

2 lbs.	carrots	1 Tbsp	salt
3 Tbsp	butter or butter substitute	1 Tbsp	fresh parsley, for garnish (optional)
1/3 cup	brown sugar		

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 20 minutes

DIRECTIONS

1. Peel and wash carrots in cold water and drain.
2. Place carrots in a sauté pan and cover with water, add salt.
3. Bring carrots to a boil and cook for 10-15 minutes, until fork tender.
4. Drain carrots and set aside.
5. In the same pan, melt the butter and add sugar, cook until the sugar is dissolved.
6. Add the carrots back into the sauté pan and gently stir, coating the carrots with the glaze.
7. Garnish with fresh parsley, if desired.

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Sautéed Swiss Chard

You will need 5 lbs. of Swiss chard for this recipe. When chopped, you should have about 16-20 cups of roughly chopped chard. It seems like a lot, but it will cook down to a fraction of what you started with.



INGREDIENTS

3 Tbsp	olive oil	½	lemon, for zest (optional)
1 small	leek, white part only	¼ tsp	salt (optional)
1 tsp	garlic, minced	¼ tsp	pepper (optional)
5 pounds	swiss chard		

Servings: 10-12
Prep Time: 10 minutes
Cook Time: 10 minutes

DIRECTIONS

1. Wash and drain the Swiss chard, remove the stems and discard. Wash the leek well to remove any dirt in between its layers.
 2. Roughly chop the Swiss chard and set aside.
 3. Finely dice the leek and set aside.
 4. Heat oil in a large Dutch oven or sauté pan.
 5. Add the leek and garlic and cook for 5 minutes.
 6. Add the Swiss chard in batches and stir. It will cook down rather quickly so, keep adding the chard as your pan allows.
 7. Cook for 4-5 minutes and remove from heat.
 8. When you have the chard in a serving dish, if desired, sparingly zest a lemon over the dish.
 9. Sprinkle with a small amount of salt and pepper, if desired.
-

Lemon Berry Trifle



INGREDIENTS

30 oz	fresh berries of your choice	1	lemon, zested and juiced
3 Tbsp	granulated sugar	1	pound cake loaf
4 oz	cream cheese, room temperature	or	
32 oz	whipped topping, may use non-dairy or prepared whipped cream	1	layer of favorite cake recipe

Servings: 10-12
Prep Time: 30 minutes
Passive Time: 1 hour

DIRECTIONS

1. Place cleaned and dried berries into a large bowl. Add granulated sugar, gently tossing until well mixed.
2. Allow berries to sit at room temperature for at least 30 minutes to allow time to macerate. (A sugar syrup will form.)
3. In another large bowl or a stand mixer, whip the cream cheese and whipped topping together on medium-low until combined.
4. With mixer on low, add lemon zest and juice, blending until well combined.
5. Break cake up into bite size pieces.
6. After berries have macerated, it is time to build the trifle, using a large trifle bowl or 12 small trifle bowls.
7. On the bottom of the bowl(s), place a layer of the whipped topping mixture. With the back of a spoon or an inverted spatula, even the whipped topping mixture out so that the top is flat for the next layer.
8. On top of the whipped topping mixture, place a layer of cake pieces, facing prettier pieces out along the outside edge of the bowl. This layer is does not have to be completely even or full. The berries will fill in any gaps.
9. Follow the whipped topping mixture layer with an even layer of berries with their juice.
10. Repeat the layers until you have reached the top of your bowl. Top with final layer of whipped topping mixture.
11. Refrigerate at least one hour until well chilled.
12. Decorate as desired. If making ahead, do not decorate. Wrap filled trifle bowl with plastic wrap and refrigerate. On the day it is needed, remove trifle and decorate before serving.

Flourless Chocolate Cake



INGREDIENTS

4 oz bittersweet chocolate
8 Tbsp unsalted butter
¾ cups granulated sugar

¼ cup cocoa powder, plus more for
 dusting and decorating
3 large eggs, room temperature
1 tsp pure vanilla extract, vegan
⅛ tsp salt
⅛ tsp cinnamon

Servings: 10 – 12
Prep time: 20 minutes
Bake time: 20 – 25 minutes

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 375°.
2. Cut out an 8" circle from parchment paper and place in the bottom of an 8" cake pan. Spray the paper with cooking spray and lightly dust with cocoa powder.
3. Chop chocolate finely and place in a microwave safe bowl.
4. Cut up butter into tablespoons and add to the chopped chocolate.
5. Place bowl in microwave and melt chocolate and butter on high, for 30 seconds at a time, stirring in between each time, until chocolate and butter are melted. Set aside to cool, about 5 minutes.
6. After chocolate and butter have cooled, add granulated sugar, cocoa powder, salt and cinnamon to the bowl, whisking until thoroughly combined.
7. In a separate bowl, beat eggs.
8. Add beaten eggs and vanilla to the chocolate mixture, mixing until thoroughly combined.
9. Pour into prepped cake pan.
10. Bake at 375° for 20-25 minutes or until a crust has formed.
11. Remove pan from oven and place on a cooling rack for 10 minutes.
12. Invert pan onto serving plate and allow cake to cool completely.
13. Once cake is cooled, wrap well and refrigerate until needed.
14. Before serving, if desired, sift cocoa powder and/or powder sugar over cake.
15. Serve with whipped cream and berries.

Afterword

Over the last few years, we have met people who are not only new to cooking, but who are choosing to eat food that is better for their health and well-being. Many of them spoke about not knowing how to entertain and prepare vegetarian meals for a crowd. We knew that we could help relieve all that stress.

We put together this collection of recipes so that anyone can successfully host an amazing, vegetarian celebration for family and friends.

We hope that you enjoy using this Taste of Spring e-book as much as we enjoyed putting it together for you. Please tell your friends about this e-book, our website at nowfindvegetarian.com and our family of apps. Please like and share us on social media.

Thank you and best regards from the team at Now Find Foods!

About The Authors

Jessica MacDonald Lee and **Renée Lumbreras** are friends and fellow foodies, who are committed to spread the word that eating cleanly or living with food allergies does not have to be boring, but can be exciting and delicious.

Every day they can be found in the kitchen, cooking and baking to create their take on all types of food, from classics to new favorites.

Jessica and Renée are aided in their quest for amazing recipes by their families, as their always willing and brutally honest team of testers.

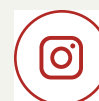
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