

## The Dairy Free Library: reFresh

Every Tuesday we will feature a review from our Dairy-Free Library. This week's selection is reFresh: Contemporary Vegan Recipes From the Award Winning Fresh Restaurants by Ruth Tal with Jennifer Houston (reviewed by jae steele, author of Get It Ripe) - I'll admit - the first time I thumbed through this book (on a visit to Ruth's popular Toronto veg chain restaurant, Fresh) I was a little peeved. What gives? I thought. There are so many repeat recipes (from Ruth's first two cookbooks). Do I really need this one for just a few new recipes? It wasn't until I read the preface at a later date that I learned that this book is actually a polished-up do-over of Ruth's first, and far more modest two-colour cookbook that came out in 2000 under the title JuiceForLife (which is also the former name of her resto) ...

**Best bits:** Especially if you don't have JuiceForLife, this book is one that's well worth getting your hands on. It's beautiful and glossy and there's an immediate feeling that if you make the recipes that line its pages you will blossom into a virtuous, healthy being. It's full colour throughout with lots of beautiful photographs - a better reflection of Ruth's restaurants, really. It offers lots of tasty options for vegetable-packed meals (though as a nutritionist I'd say to just be sure to use only 2/3 of the rice called for in any of the Rice Bowl recipes). The recipe titles are creative, though not obscure-sounding. The recipe methods aren't complicated. I made the Fresh Burger and they tasted pretty good (though they didn't hold together as well as I hoped they would - and that they do when you order them at the restaurant, and the batch I made yielded 8 patties, not 6 as the recipe says, for what it's worth).

**Less-wonderful bits:** Like I said, there's a decent amount of recipe overlap with her first book - it's the ones that are labeled "New!" that appear only in this edition. I'd like to see more of a push for local and organic ingredients in the book, but the lack of it is also in line with the resto's approach from what I know of the place. I might also note that some of the measurements are a little vague for my liking, like "1 shake cinnamon" or "4 slices pineapple" - I'd have to ask, what sized slices? or what if my cinnamon isn't in a shaker?

**Whole foods focus?:** Sure!

**Vegan-friendly?:** Indeed!

**Eco-conscious?:** Somewhat - in the sense that it's free of animal products. (Though I doubt the glossy pages are made of recycled paper.)

**Web presence?:** yup

**To Purchase:** reFresh is available on Amazon. This is a third party review by jae steele, author of the award-winning cookbook and health resource, Get It Ripe: a fresh take on vegan cooking and living. She is also a registered holistic nutritionist who practices in Toronto, Canada. A lover of cookbooks for many years, her collection to date boasts over 120 volumes, and is slowly taking over her kitchen. You can keep up with her food blog at Domestic Affair, and take a peek at her cooking videos.