



Singapore's pioneering plant-based burger joint

Meat substitute patties are now revolutionizing the way we eat – but decade-old Veganburg, the "world's first 100% plant-based burger joint", is still impacting the food scene

A healthier lifestyle may be what compelled Singaporean Alex Tan to go vegetarian over 20 years ago. But it wasn't until 2009 when he came across a news article about the *Livestock's Long Shadow* report – a United Nations document assessing the livestock industry's damage to the environment – that he became aware of the ethical reasons for a vegan diet. Inspired, he founded Veganburg, Singapore's – and perhaps the world's – first plant-based burger joint a year later.

Veganburg led the way in introducing plant-based patties that are handmade from GMO-free soybeans. The brand continues to use organic whole grain for their buns, and GMO-free potato and organic seaweed for their fries. This commitment to sustainability also extends to the rest of their business – their establishments feature 100% compostable cups and cutlery as well as upcycled tables.

The brand went global in 2015 when Tan launched an outlet in San Francisco. With plans to open 300 more outlets in California, and more around the rest of Asia, Veganburg looks set to take on the world. Its Avocado Beetroot and Creamy Shrooms are best sellers, while Chili Krab, a reinvention of Singapore's iconic dish, and Haight 'N Salsa, a tribute to San Francisco's hippie culture – keep things fresh for customers.

"When we first opened [in 2010], our customer base was 70% vegetarians and 30% non-vegetarians. Now it consists of 80% non-vegetarians," Tan says.

Ultimately, Tan is a family man. "I care about my daughters and our children's children's future," he says. "What would happen to them and our planet if the world's fast food system continues to be the way it is?" It's something to ponder when you grab your next burger. veganburg.com
– **Victoria Khoundina**



Healthy bites in... **MANILA**

The Good Seed

This café in Kapitolyo champions plant-based dining with a menu inspired by global cuisines. The no-frills interior will make you feel right at home, whether you're savoring juicy and crunchy tofu dumplings, or slurping down black olive and basil pesto penne. thegoodseed.ph

Pipino

Giving vegans in Manila a place to call their own, this café has everything from burgers and pastas to Filipino classics. Standouts include the Portobello inasal and pineapple fried rice with *embutido*, a cured, dry "sausage" made from vegetable protein. pipinoveg.com

Cosmic

Poblacion's Cosmic is a welcoming vegan and vegetarian bistro that supports local designers. Best sellers include *bagnet* – in which the soy-and-starch meat substitute recreates the crispy, chewy texture of deep-fried pork belly. fb.com/cosmicphilippines

