

# Celeb Kitchen

Television presenter Fiona Phillips tells Catherine Mortimer why being a vegetarian keeps her happy and healthy...

**I**'m a big animal lover so I became a vegetarian when I was 24. I'd meant to do it since I was five years old and mum took me on day out to the local cattle market. I loved the cows, particularly touching all their wet noses. But then I saw them being packed in vans and mum told me where they were going. She didn't say it to be cruel but I was inconsolable for weeks.

**I love vegetarian food because it's** cheap and easy and you're often cooking with fresh ingredients. Last night I got some baby asparagus, peppers and onions and roasted them with goat's cheese. It was delicious. I try to have a balanced diet of wholegrain cereal for breakfast, salad for lunch and a stir-fry for dinner. If you looked in my fridge you'd see it's packed full of fruit and vegetables.

**Being a vegetarian means my husband Martin usually cooks** his own stuff because he's not vegetarian and I don't like handling or cooking meat. But I'd hate to be sanctimonious about it. I don't make a fuss and I'll never understand why people get in a flap when they hear you're vegetarian and think they can't invite you to dinner.

**Before I gave up GMTV last year** I cooked like billyo at the weekends to get stuff in the freezer for my children, Nathaniel, 10, and Mackenzie, 7, which they could eat in the week. I'm more particular about their diet than I am my own. I never give them anything that's ready made and they're vegetarian like me. Martin says, "Why don't you make some time for me instead of making the children food?" My job had too much of a detrimental affect on family life.

**My favourite vegetarian recipe is Lesley Water's Apple and Cheese Scone Whole Grain Loaf** (recipe available at [www.wholegrain.co.uk](http://www.wholegrain.co.uk)). I love lying in bed reading all my cookery books and making lists of what to get. My kids love cooking with me too. It's a lovely thing to do when you've got time.



**I went on Ready, Steady, Cook with Eamonn Holmes** a few years ago. I took a big bag of potatoes and nothing else because mashed potato is my favourite dish. You know a mountain of mash with butter and cheese is my idea of a slap up meal? The chef Kevin Woodford was really annoyed but I was in my element. He made me a chip butty and potato rosti.

**My favourite celebrity chef is Jamie Oliver.** His Italian-based food is delicious. I've eaten at his restaurant Fifteen and I loved the simple flavours. I can't stand those Michelin starred chefs. When you look at the ingredients in their recipes you think, "Where the hell am I going to get this from?" It probably involves a trek to the Himalayas or something and that really puts you off.

**I'm careful with my diet because I suffer with anaemia.** It started one day when I was walking to get my children from school and I felt dizzy and breathless. Tests showed I was dangerously anaemic so since then I try and make sure I eat the right things

like wholegrain cereals. I always start the day with a bowl of Shreddies or Cheerios which have 25% of your recommended daily iron intake.

**My favourite treat is** a takeaway. There's a brilliant Indian restaurant called Chutneys in Wandsworth where we live. It does a gorgeous paneer tikka, which is a delicious roasted cheese dish. Mmm... I could eat it right now!

Fiona is working with Nestlé whole grain cereals to help mums improve their family's diets. Find out more at [www.wholegrain.co.uk](http://www.wholegrain.co.uk)

