

# The best vegan/plant-based fish taste test: fish fillets, fish cakes, tuna and smoked salmon



14-04-22 / 7 min read

AUTHOR: STEF BOTTINELLI CONTRIBUTOR: MOLLY LONG



While the last few years have produced countless options for vegans when it comes to plant-based meat, the same has not always been true for vegan/plant-based fish. The texture and flavour nuances of different types of fish are typically more difficult to reproduce in a plant-based alternative, which is why so many vegan food brands have opted to concentrate on things like vegan sausages, burgers and chicken.

However, this is not to say there haven't been companies working away to perfect their fish alternatives. There are increasingly more plant-based fish options available, and lots more on the way. In many ways, plant-based fish is the new plant-based meat, with companies dedicating significant time and focus to it.

---

potatoes. Other plant-based fish ingredients used you might not be familiar with yet, are konjac, a type of root vegetable grown in Asia and used to imitate prawns and smoked salmon, thanks to the jelly extracted from this bulbo-tuber which can replicate the texture of these types of fish and can be easily flavoured; and banana blossom, which is the flower found at the end of a bunch of bananas and used to replicate the flaky yet 'meaty' flesh of white fish like cod.

Supermarkets sell a variety of fish-alternatives. Some, [like M&S](#), offer own-brand products, while others stock brands like Quorn, Moving Mountains, Linda McCartney's, Good Catch, Loma Linda and Birdseye Green Cuisine.

A popular alternative is vegan fish fingers. These are typically made from potato, soy and flour. There is also a growing number of vegan tuna options available. Marigold, a brand which is popular for its nutritional yeast product, also sells Tunah, which is made from flavoured soy protein. Other vegan tuna alternatives include Tuno from US brand Loma Linda, Future Tvuna from Future Farm and Tuna-Style Flakes from Good Catch. Additionally, Sainsbury's has recently released its own line of vegan tuna – called [Chuna](#). Beyond fish fingers and tuna, vegan fish products like fish burgers, fish fillets, fish cakes, fish pies, breaded prawns, crab cakes, smoked salmon and even vegan sushi, are also available.

## Is vegan/plant-based fish healthy?

One of the benefits of eating [plant-based fish alternatives](#) is the reduced risk of health problems associated with eating real fish. As the world's waterways and seas are becoming more polluted, this has impacted their fish population. Mercury ingestion – which has links to some cancers, heart disease and diabetes – is a particular worry when eating fish, and pregnant women are advised to limit their consumption to avoid passing the toxic metal through their placenta to their baby. No such restraint needs to be adhered to for plant-based options – pregnant women can eat as much vegan fish as they like. Similarly, it is safe for young children to consume it and actually it can make for a quick and healthy dinner idea. As with all diets – plant-based or not – eating everything in moderation is a good way stay healthy.

Additionally, microplastics are bad for the environment and for humans, but thankfully, this problem is greatly diminished with vegan fish. The only microplastics associated with vegan fish come from packaging, not the sea.

Another health benefit is the nutritional value. Many common ingredients like tofu and chickpeas are already naturally high in protein, while other alternatives are fortified with vitamins like B12 – essential for human health – and sometimes with minerals. Additionally, many fish alternatives, like V-Bites Fish Steaks are low in saturated fats, making them a good healthy alternative and potentially aiding weight loss. One thing to watch out for, like with any diet, is the amount of salt contained in some vegan fish products. Do not assume that just because it plant-based, it is healthy to eat huge amounts of a product – breaded options in particular can contain high levels of salt and higher amounts of refined carbohydrates.

## Can you eat fish on a plant-based diet?

Plant-based diets exclude all types of animal products, so eating real fish is a no. However those eating a mostly plant-based or flexitarian diet can eat fish if they choose to. Those following a plant-based or vegetarian diet can of course eat vegan fish.

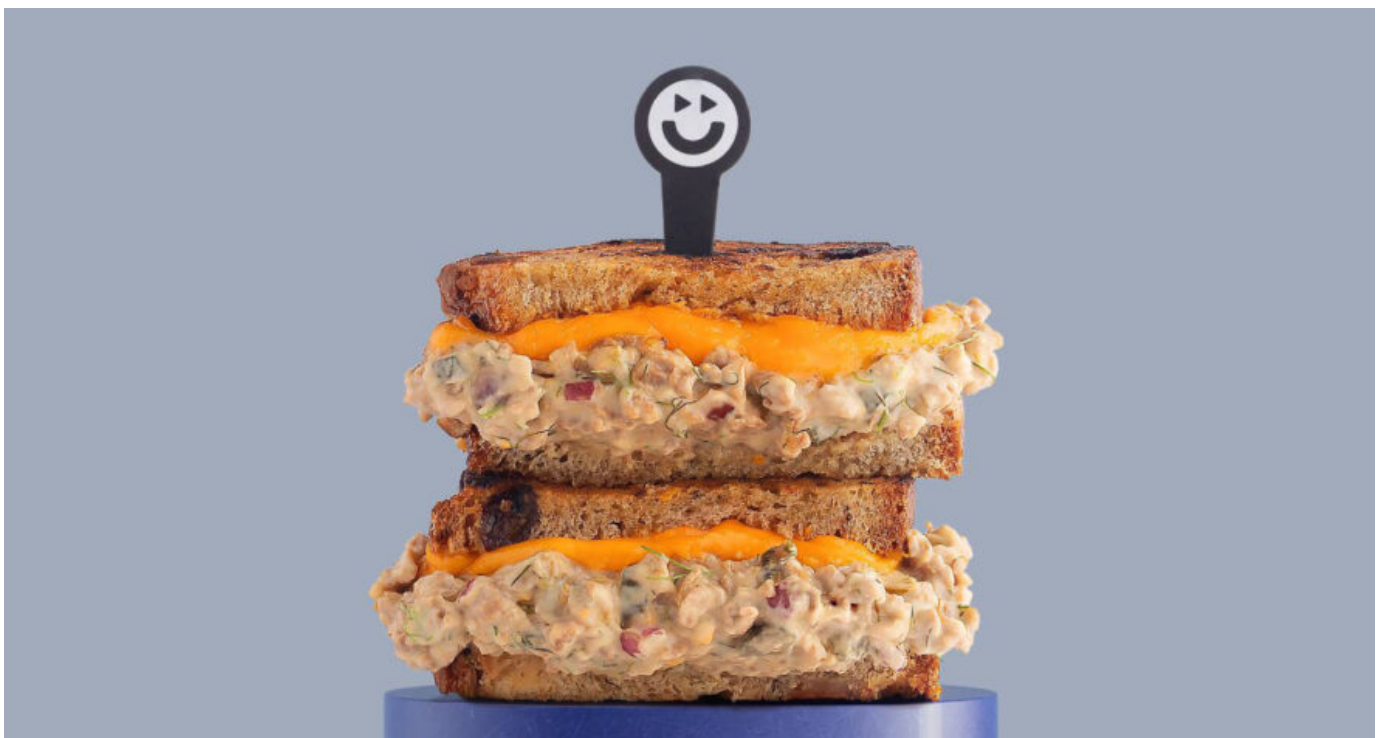
## Taste test: the best vegan/plant-based fish

With so many new products on the market, it wasn't easy to make a final decision in some of these categories. In others, there were clear winners, showing that some R&D is still needed in the plant-based fish sector.

### Best vegan/plant-based tuna: Future Farm Future Tvuna

**Future Tvuna** was the clear winner in this category. It has a fishy taste and its texture and mouthfeel is very similar to real tuna. Good job **Future Farm!**

Runners-up: **OmniTuna**, **Loma Linda Tuno** and Sainbury's Plant-Pioneers Chuna all have a good texture, similar to tuna flakes, but they all lack the fishy taste. This does not mean they are not enjoyable. We solved the problem by eating them mixed with a seaweed mayo (simply mix a few flakes of nori into a good quality plant-based mayonnaise) which gave them a fishy flavour.



Future Farm Future Tvuna

If you've been missing fish and chips since becoming vegan, fear no more as Moving Mountains Fish Fillets are very similar to the real thing, with an excellent flavour, mouthfeel and a good breadcrumb coating. Made with flour and soy, they have 10g of protein per 100G, 4.5g of fibre and only 1.4g of saturated fats. Just add chips and mushy peas.

**Runners up:** Plant Pioneers Battered Fishless Fillets, Fry's Fish-Style Fillets and Quorn Battered Fishless Fillets are also excellent choices with a good cod-like flavour and flaky texture.

## Best vegan/plant-based smoked salmon: Odontella Smoked Vegan Salmon

**Odontella Smoked Vegan Salmon** is the most similar in both texture and taste to the real thing. Made with konjac, it has the same wetness and slight sliminess (in the best possible way) as real smoked salmon. It also has a good bite, a noticeable smokiness and definite fishiness. A little on the pricey side at £8.99 for 120g, but worth the money. Delicious.

**Runner up:** **Vbites Smoked Salmon Style Slices** might lack the texture of smoked salmon – their consistency is similar to a cold cut – but their flavour makes up for it: fishy, smokey and very satisfying. At £1.99 for 100g, it is also affordable and perfect on toast or in salads.



Odontella Vegan Smoked Salmon

Derek and Chad Sarno have done it again with their fish alternative brand Good Catch. The pea protein-based [New England Seasoned 8 Crab Free Cakes](#) and [Thai Style 8 Fish Free Cakes](#) are delicious, have a crab-like flavour and a good texture.

## Best vegan/plant-based battered fish cakes: M&S Plant Kitchen 2 Melt in the Middle No Fish Cakes

[M&S Plant Kitchen 2 Melt in the Middle No Fish Cakes](#) have a coconut cream centre, which might sound odd, but actually works very well and adds a touch of exotic to these tasty rice and potato-based fish cakes.

Runners up: [ASDA Extra Special Vegan Melt in the Middle Fishless Cakes](#) also score very well in this test, with good flavour and mouthfeel; as do soy-based [Tesco Plant Chef Fish Free Cakes](#).

*This article is co-authored by Stef Bottinelli and Molly Long*

[Features](#)[Innovation](#)[Nutrition](#)[Retail and consumer insights](#)[Sustainability](#)

SHARE:



RELATED CONTENT