



# dining out AWARDS vegetarian 09 times

Readers' favorite veg restaurants from sea to shining sea

Every year, more and more exclusively veg restaurants pop up across the United States like stars in the night sky—too numerous to count. While each has its shining attributes, we wanted to know our readers' go-to restaurants from coast to coast, in five geographic regions: the Northeast, the Midwest, the South, the Northwest, and the Southwest.

Nearly 700 readers voted in VT's 2009 Dining Out Awards, casting their nominations for five regional winners and a roster of specialty awards, including Most Eco-Fabulous and Totally RAWsome!

From the Big Apple to the Bay Area, the sheer number of eateries that garnered votes reflects that vegetarianism is alive and well in every neck of the woods in America. And that, dear readers, is something we can all be happy about.

## And the **Specialty Awards** go to ...

### Best Fine Dining Millennium Restaurant

San Francisco • [millenniumrestaurant.com](http://millenniumrestaurant.com)

"Millennium is the perfect place for a romantic dinner for two, or even a date with yourself for solo vegan travelers."

—Mary Lawrence

### Most Eco-Fabulous Java Green

Washington • [javagreencafe.com](http://javagreencafe.com)

"They use organic ingredients, buy fair trade, offer chinaware and biodegradable utensils, and are a member of the Clean Energy Partnership. What's not to applaud?"

—Rachel Dean

### Most Promising Rookie The VegiTerranean

Akron, Ohio • [thevegiterranean.com](http://thevegiterranean.com)

"The piccata is to die for."

—Lauren McKnight-Ford

### Most Zen Ubuntu

Napa, Calif. • [ubuntunapa.com](http://ubuntunapa.com)

"Feel like one-upping your friends who went to The French Laundry while in Napa Valley? At Ubuntu, you get a world-class, seasonal wine-country menu plus a great yoga studio."

—Jordan Allen

### Best-Kept Secret (Until Now) Mineral

Murphys, Calif. • [mineralrestaurant.com](http://mineralrestaurant.com)

"A tiny, undiscovered gem in the heart of cattle country and the Sierra Foothills wine region. The food is creative and complex; the bar is in the kitchen so you can chat with the chef as your food is being prepared; and, in winter, the dining room only has 12 seats so it's like a dinner party every night."

—Maya Radisich

### Best Burger (tie) Follow Your Heart

Canoga Park, Calif. • [followyourheart.com](http://followyourheart.com)

"A Southern California landmark, with a great veggie burger and many other taste delights." —Andrew Harrison

### Real Food Daily

Santa Monica, Calif. • [realfood.com](http://realfood.com)

"The tempeh burger rocks!"

—Sophie Aaronson

### Most Mouth-Watering Mock Meat Red Bamboo

New York • [redbamboo-nyc.com](http://redbamboo-nyc.com)

"Veg Buffalo wings that even have a little stick in the middle of them like a bone and amazing veg soul chicken!"

—Ember Pickands

### Totally RAWsome! Café Gratitude

San Francisco • [cafegratitude.com](http://cafegratitude.com)

"When you walk through the door, every staff member looks up and greets you with a jovial 'Welcome!'"

—Jenny Zimmermann

### Favorite Fast Food (tie) Zen Burger

New York • [zenburger.com](http://zenburger.com)

"Occasionally, I do miss fast food, but Zen Burger's fabulous fake chicken nuggets more than make up for it."

—Julie Leff

### V.G. Burgers

Boulder, Colo. • [vgburgers.com](http://vgburgers.com)

"Wonderful vegan burgers, healthy fries, and delicious organic, vegan shakes. Yum yum! A must visit for my burger cravings." —Sunie Pope

### Late-Night Oasis Hard Times Cafe

Minneapolis

"Where else can you get cheap vegan food 22 hours a day? One dollar coffee. Vegan cookies, muffins, and peanut butter cups. Mounds of food. Crazy artwork."

—Tori Farbisz