



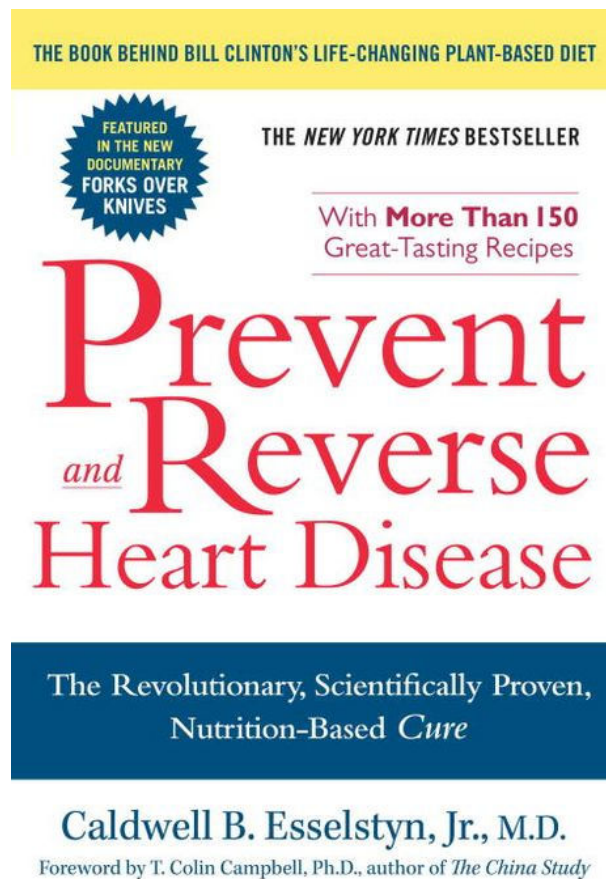
Plant-Based Pros on the Books They Recommend Again and Again

By Courtney Davison
2025-04-15 11:15:17



The right book at the right time can change your life. We asked plant-based experts to share books that have left a lasting impression on them—from groundbreaking guides to innovative cookbooks, inspiring memoirs, and more. Whether you're just starting out or looking to reinvigorate your plant-based journey, these titles offer knowledge, encouragement, and a fresh dose of motivation.

Editor's note: FOK may collect a small share of sales from some of the links on this page, though it doesn't influence our selection.



Prevent and Reverse Heart Disease

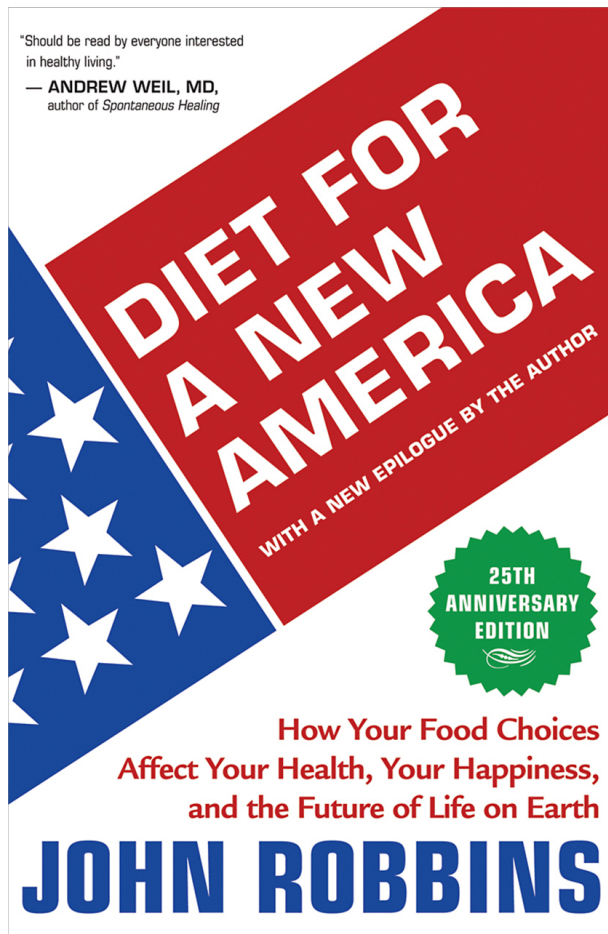
“Dr. Caldwell Esselstyn’s [Prevent and Reverse Heart Disease](#) may very well be the most important health book ever written. It’s the science-backed, detailed guide that Dr. Esselstyn used to remedy heart disease for scores of his patients and now legions of people around the world. The book, which includes 150 mouthwatering recipes from his wife, Ann, is a must read for anyone who wants to render heart disease as nothing more than a ‘paper tiger.’”

—[Brian Wendel](#), founder of Forks Over Knives

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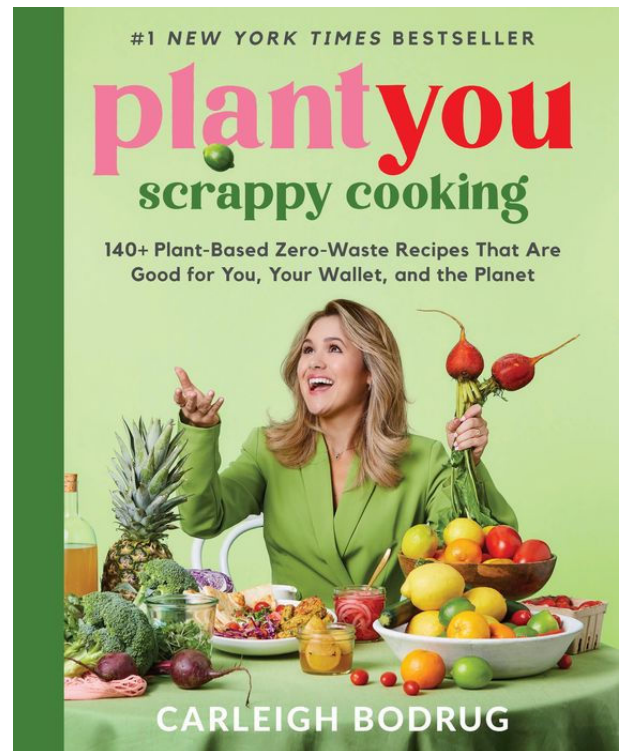
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Diet for a New America

“John Robbins’ *Diet for a New America* was the first book that opened my eyes and made me want to remove animal products from my diet. Published in 1987, this book pioneered the plant-based movement and sparked my personal growth and career [path]. *Diet for a New America* is in its 25th-anniversary edition and is still a valuable read.”

—[Dreena Burton](#), author of *Dreena’s Kind Kitchen: 100+ Whole-Foods Vegan Recipes to Enjoy Every Day*



PlantYou Scrappy Cooking

“I loved *PlantYou Scrappy Cooking*, Carleigh Bodrug’s second cookbook, which came out last year. It makes you realize that almost everything you think is waste can actually be used for cooking, in exceptionally creative ways. It’s easy to get into a pattern of throwing away things like zucchini rinds, broccoli bottoms, lemon seeds, and date pits, but Bodrug shows you how to transform them into sauces, jams, ‘coffee,’ and much more.”

—[Cyrus Khambatta, Ph.D.](#), co-author of *Mastering Diabetes*

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The Homemade Vegan Pantry

“Miyoko Schinner is a legend in the plant-based movement, and in *The Homemade Vegan Pantry*, she provides readers with an essential guidebook for creating many plant-based staples at home, such as sausages, pasta, sour cream, and vegetable stock, instead of purchasing highly processed alternatives at the store. A few of my favorite oil-free recipes in the book are Oil-Free Eggless Mayo, Creamy Soy Milk, and Nice Thick Nondairy Yogurt. Some recipes have added sugars, oils, and salt, but you can omit them in many cases.”

—[Sharon Palmer, MSFS, RDN](#), founder of The Plant-Powered Dietitian

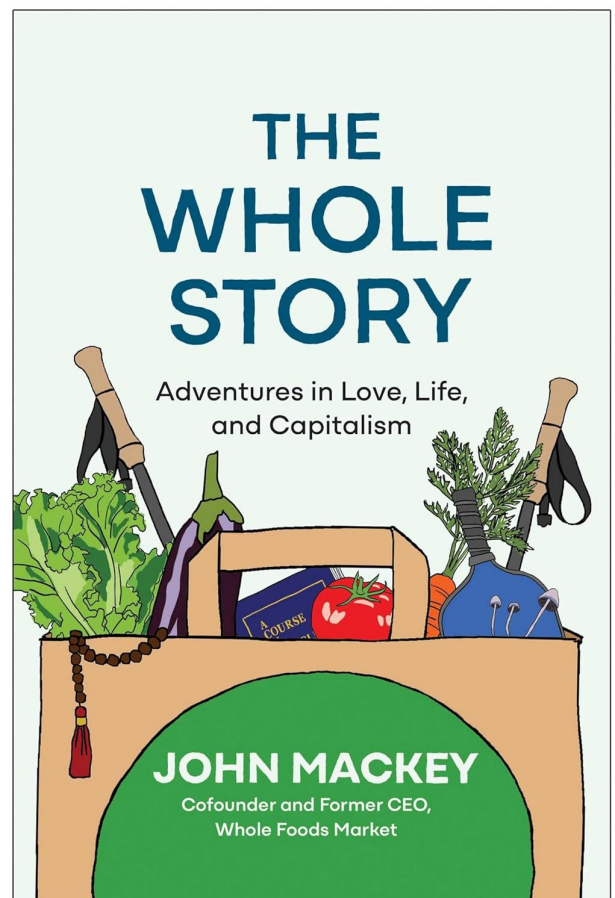


The China Study; The Starch Solution; Food Is Climate; The

Pleasure Trap; and Why We Love Dogs, Eat Pigs, and Wear Cows

“My all-time top recommendations are always *The China Study* by T. Colin Campbell, Ph.D., and *The Starch Solution* by John McDougall, M.D. More recently I’ve recommended Glen Merzer’s *Food Is Climate* several times. (It’s a short, factual read, with the second half of the book being recipes to help the reader start eating plant-based.) *The Pleasure Trap* by Doug Lisle, Ph.D., and Alan Goldhamer, D.C., and *Why We Love Dogs, Eat Pigs, and Wear Cows* by Melanie Joy are books I often suggest to those looking to dive a little deeper into the plant-based lifestyle.”

—[Rachael J. Brown](#), author of *For Fork’s Sake: A Quick Guide to Healing Yourself and the Planet Through a Plant-Based Diet*



The Whole Story

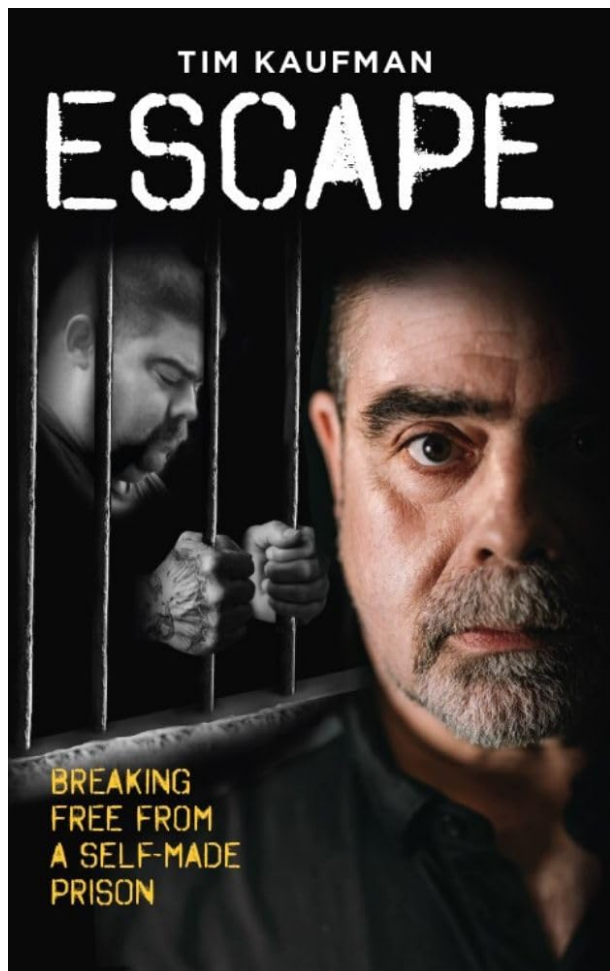
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“I highly recommend diving into [Whole Foods co-founder] John Mackey’s latest masterpiece, *The Whole Story*. With the narrative flow of a captivating novel, Mackey [tells the story of Whole Foods and] intricately weaves in his transition to a vegan, whole-food, plant-based lifestyle, offering profound insights into his personal evolution. Moreover, the book explores his bold decision to [sell] his brainchild to the wealthiest suitor in the world. Trust me: It’s a page-turner!”

—[Rip Esselstyn](#), founder of PLANTSTRONG and author of *The Engine 2 Diet*

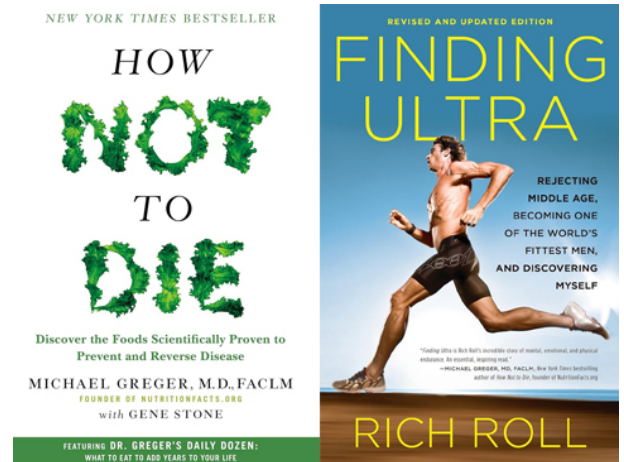


Escape: Breaking Free from a Self-Made Prison

“One book I’d recommend to *Forks Over Knives* readers is Tim Kaufman’s *Escape: Breaking Free from a Self-Made Prison*. It’s about Kaufman’s journey from obesity

and addiction to health. His story is relatable and inspirational, a testimonial that shows how changing your lifestyle can help you overcome life’s challenges.”

—[Darshana Thacker Wendel](#), author of *Forks Over Knives: Flavor!*



How Not to Die and Finding Ultra

“*How Not to Die* by Michael Greger, M.D., is a classic that I love and consistently recommend. Another of my favorites is *Finding Ultra*, Rich Roll’s book about turning his life around. He went from an overeating, out-of-shape lawyer who couldn’t make it up the stairs to a plant-based ultra athlete completing triathlons on each of Hawaii’s islands in under a week.”

—[Katie Simmons](#), Chicago-based personal chef and founder of Plants-Rule