



DUSHI BITES
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Wellness Trend A Vegan Lifestyle

The worldwide trend to live healthier, eat and drink more animal-friendly and stay fitter has also reached Aruba. Health clubs and exercising are on the rise, local farming and using fresh, local products is the new way to go, and despite a deeply rooted food culture that favors BBQ, lots of meat and starch, there are more and more options on the island to eat healthier.

Happy Buddha Aruba, a local and well-known yoga center on the island anticipated on the increased interest of its customers to create an overall healthier lifestyle. Corinne Voermans, owner of Happy Buddha explains "I see a lot of people that struggle with their body weight or have weight loss issues. What they don't fully understand, is that only 20% of weight-loss can be obtained by frequent exercising, while 80% of your body weight is determined by what and how much you eat. To me it made sense to share more knowledge about nutrition and eating habits with my clientele".

Then Corinne met Meredith Marin, a New York-born specialist in food & nutrition, turned vegan consultant. Meredith is a vegan herself and when she moved to Aruba 1,5 years ago she found it very difficult to find vegan ingredients in stores and vegan options at local restaurants. "A lot has changed since I first arrived here. There are so much more options now, both at supermarkets as well as at restaurants, I am truly impressed". Being vegan means living a plant-based lifestyle in which you use no animal-based products at all. From a food perspective this means choosing from a plant-based diet. The vegan diet is very beneficial to your health and has proven by various studies worldwide that it eliminates multiple diseases such as diabetes and obesity. It is one of the healthiest ways to eat.

In 2017 Corinne partnered with Meredith and offered a very first workshop that was called mindful eating. It immediately was a big hit. During the course all kinds of information were shared on nutrition in general, what vegan food is, how to eat slower and more consciously. Meredith included a cooking demonstration on how to prepare a fresh and delicious meal with plant-based ingredients. Participants were very enthusiastic and the word spread fast on the island.

Yoga, Food + Live Music

Vegan Nights @ Happy Buddha

That is why a new course called Vegan Nights will launch at Happy Buddha Aruba, hosted by Meredith Marin. This is first and foremost a vegan social gathering with information on nutrition, vegan food options and even vegan wines. It will take place on Friday nights on February 23rd, March 23rd, and April 20th from 6:30 – 8:30 pm. Space is limited.

RSVP to veganaruba@gmail.com.

Location:

Happy Buddha Aruba, Monserat 5, Palm Beach
[Facebook.com/happybuddhaaruba](https://www.facebook.com/happybuddhaaruba).



Where to find tasty vegan food options

Suggested Restaurants:

- Alfresco** (they have a take-out service for vegan breakfast & lunch too)
- Cuba's Cookin'**
- Carito's Bakery in Fantastic Gardens Elements**
- Eduardo's Beach Shack**
- Fishes & More**
- Garden Fresh**
- Gelattissimo**, various vegan ice cream flavors
- Screaming Eagle**, vegan tasting menu (order in advance)
- Manchebo's Chop House**
- Mundi Health Cafe**
- Nourish Café at Island Yoga**
- Pura Vita at BodyTech Fitness Club**
- Restaurant Vegetariano**
- White Modern Cuisine**, vegan items on their new lunch menu
- Yemanja**



Where to find vegan products and recipes

In Aruba, both Superfood and Ling & Sons have tons of vegan products for sale. In addition you will find smaller stores that specialize in organic and vegan food, such as Living Food Aruba, a health food store in Noord, and Tara Eco Supplies.

For vegan recipes, inspiration, information on a vegan diet and cooking classes:

[Facebook.com/veganaruba](https://www.facebook.com/veganaruba)

For information on a healthier lifestyle:

[Facebook.com/Transition2Health](https://www.facebook.com/Transition2Health)

For vegan catering:

[Facebook/thefunkyvegankitchen](https://www.facebook.com/thefunkyvegankitchen)

Lunch deliveries at only USD \$10 on Monday, Wednesday & Friday

Also catering for larger groups & private cooking classes



Aruba's Culinary Scene

Mundi Health Café



A brand new arrival on Aruba's culinary scene with a very special story is Mundi Health Café. This San Nicolas-based, locally owned cafe and vegetarian/vegan restaurant opened its doors January 25th, on Aruba's national holiday 'Dia di Betico' inside a fully restored monument called Nicolaas Store.

This monument in downtown San Nicolas, Aruba's second largest city, was built around 1940 it consisted only of the ground floor. It was owned by the Nicolaas family and served as a store where they sold books, instruments, newspapers, gifts and more. In later years the first floor was constructed to serve as the house where the Nicolaas family lived. The Nicolaas Store was a very popular store at the time. The building was abandoned for about 20 years, until Monumenten Fonds Aruba, the monument fund, bought the building in 2013. The full restoration of the monument was completed in 2016 with the intention to re-open as a Community Museum, along with an exhibit area upstairs for contemporary art and a small café.

The health café concept was an idea of 22-year old owner Tristan Nedd, born and raised in San Nicolas, who pitched it to some of his influential local friends in the neighborhood for their blessing. How he came to the health idea is a whole different story, that started in his high school years, when he was granted a full scholarship in The Netherlands, based on his talent for baseball. His entire family moved with him to Holland, his dad leaving a popular bar/restaurant in San Nicolas (Sit 'n Chat) behind, his mom leaving her Marriott career in F&B, for Tristan to further develop his baseball skills. With great success, as in 2012 he signed with the Miami Hurricanes, the college baseball program that represents the University of Miami.

At this point Tristan injures himself severely in a try-out baseball match where his eyehole is so severely damaged that it affects his eyesight. It marks the end of his dream to become a professional baseball player. Yet, the very optimistic kid decides to try his luck at film making and starts his own video production company. To further skill himself in this new field he



starts his studies at the New York Film Academy. Making ends meet in this expensive city, he starts a side-job at a trendy and popular salad bar. Working here makes Tristan realize there is a health trend happening in the culinary scene and he can't wait to bring the health concept home. Tristan, now with a bachelor's degree in film producing, is back in Aruba where he has a new mission: develop and grow the local community of his home town San Nicolas, and enlarge the awareness for locally grown products and a healthier lifestyle. "We love to eat on this island and especially in San Nicolas you will find lots of Caribbean favorites like Johnny Cake and anything from the deep fryer. I want to keep the Caribbean flavors of our kitchen, yet make the options healthier and use local crop", says Tristan. His Mundi Health Café offers delicious and healthy meals, snacks, fresh juices, detox waters and smoothies based on local products. Mundi is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Everybody pitches in: his cousin Shane Nedd, an EPB and EPI graduate with a few years of experience in the kitchen of popular restaurant Gianni's, is the chef, another cousin his kitchen-aid. Tristan's brother helps out as a server, and his grandmother makes the daily fresh homemade 'soup' by her own recipe and from her own kitchen. Lastly, his former classmate from kindergarten helps out as a waitress. She too had some misfortune in her young life as cancer spread in her left leg, which had to be amputated. With her handicap she found it difficult to find a job, yet Tristan didn't hesitate for one second and she is now happily employed at Mundi.

The name Mundi comes from Axis Mundi, meaning the center of the universe. And this is how Tristan approaches his new life work: bring products that are grown in Aruba to the center of attention and spread the message of a healthier lifestyle from Mundi Health Café over San Nicolas, and the entire island. Future plans include health stores and a criollo shop, selling the usual local favorite snacks in a healthier way.

Mundi Health Café

Van de Veen Zeppenfeldstraat #27, San Nicolas

Hours 8:00 AM - 11:00 PM

[Facebook.com/mundihealthcafe](https://www.facebook.com/mundihealthcafe)





In September of last year the fully modernized restaurant of the Fish House opened, with indoor seating in an air-conditioned dining room as well as outdoor seating on a covered terrace. Both dining areas offer sweeping views over the turquoise waters of the Caribbean and dozens of yachts. On the menu in the restaurant you will find a larger variety than on the bar menu, like rib-eye, tenderloin, the fresh catch of the day, conch (a local delicacy) and chicken.

At the helm in the kitchen is Ahmorry Christiaans, an Aruban chef who graduated from EPI Horeca. Ahmorry was part of the culinary staff of the Renaissance Aruba Resort for seven years, before joining Fish House in September of 2017. To him it is most important that all dishes contain flavors and influences of the Aruban kitchen, and that all fish served here is fresh and caught locally. The fresh fish (try the conch kroket!), combined with stunning views, a refreshing sea breeze and some couleur locale offered by the presence of Varadero club members and boat owners, makes this an interesting, authentic place to visit.

Fish House Island Bar & Restaurant is open Tuesday to Friday from 2 pm to 10 pm and on Saturday and Sunday from 12 noon to 10 pm. Monday closed. Happy Hour on Wednesday (kibra siman; break the week) from 6 to 9 pm; Friday from 6 to 8 pm with discounts on drinks and a bucket deal (6 beers for 30 florins).



From The Sea

Fish House Island Bar & Restaurant

The Caribbean and seafood restaurants go hand in hand, yet when you're in Aruba, make sure to select the best places for the freshest fish dishes, straight from the ocean. Fish House Island Bar & Restaurant offers just that. Located at the Varadero Marina & Boatyard, this place is literally surrounded by fishing boats and whatever the local fishermen bring in during the day, will be served as the fresh catch on the menu.

The restaurant and bar have always been part of the harbor, yet after it changed hands last year the new local owners gave the entire place a full overhaul. In June 2017 the revamped bar opened officially under the new name Fish House Island Bar, and serves ice-cold beers, any type of mix drinks and bar food. On the bar menu you'll find various small bites like chicken wings, hamburgers and their famous 'land & sea snack platters', a combination of meat, chicken, fish and seafood served with fried funchi and French fries.

Address: Bucutiweg 34, Oranjestad

Driving instructions: behind the airport, follow signs to Amuse Bistro, continue to far end of the street, harbor entrance to your left.

More information on [Facebook.com/fishhousearuba](https://www.facebook.com/fishhousearuba)





From The Land Local Farming at Goshen

Tucked away on an elevated stretch of land, just off the main road that leads to the Alto Vista Chapel, you'll find a new organic farm by the name of Goshen. Launched in May 2017, the farm is spread out on 7.000 square meters of land producing various local fruits and vegetables, year-round. You'll find local crop, seasonal products and -soon- a kiosk where fresh juices and smoothies made from ingredients straight from the farmland, are sold. Prices are very modest here, and the breathtaking views over the island come for free.

Goshen is more than just a local farm in Aruba producing organic crop – it is part of a social project. On property a rehabilitation center provides a home to 12 adult addicts that are trying to find their way back to society. Part of the reintegration is learning to work in teams by a daily schedule

and managing responsibilities, which they practice at the farm from 8 – 12 noon. All profits of the farm go to social projects, supporting the farm's 100% holistic approach. Aruban-born James Ocalia left the island twelve years ago to study in The Netherlands. After he met his wife there and had two children, he wanted to pass on some of his passion and knowledge of Aruba's cultural aspects to his family, which resulted in sharing various culinary traditions. One thing led to another and in 2015 James returned to Aruba with his young family.

"When I first learned about Goshen I felt immediately there was a great match between my personal values and beliefs, and the organization's goals. I strongly believe that with this project we can contribute to strengthen the process of sustainable agriculture in Aruba. Furthermore, the social

aspect of this project, working with people on the farm that try to better themselves and contributing to other social projects is something I fully support", says James.

Goal of the farm is for locals and visitors to really enjoy, appreciate and eat local products. Therefore all kinds of information is provided on the crop, from health benefits to characteristics of local veggies. Instructions are given on how fresh products can be used in a daily meal plan, and how to eating fresh products can prevent diseases on the island, like diabetes. Non-processed food, fresh from the land, like the local vegetable jambo, contains many fibers and magnesium that cleans your body and helps with high sugar levels. Even a few slices of the jambo in a glass of water for instance, will benefit your health.

On the farm you can buy long beans (boonchi largo), jambo (okra), small cucumbers (comcomber chikito), and Swiss chard (warmoos) at very modest prices (all under \$6 for 800 grams to a kilo). Depending on the season, you will also find calabas, pumpkin, sweet bell pepper, spinach, pigeon peas and a variety of fruits, such as watermelon and papaya. Future plans include a tour for visitors with information on local products from the land, a 'pick your own' activity along with a small workshop on how to prepare them. The Goshen Organic Farm is open daily from 1:00 – 5:00 pm. For more information follow Goshen on Facebook and Instagram - GoshenAruba.





Craft

Founded in: July 2016

Concept: This cozy, casually elegant Coffeehouse/Bar features breakfast/brunch with a homemade liege waffle menu and a fruit & oats menu for a great start of the day. In the afternoon the place transforms to a hip bar with an extensive craft beer menu and signature cocktails that keep folks coming back for more.

Best feature: Coffee partner micro-roaster Panther Coffee, cocktails made with love and fresh ingredients that are made in-house, never frozen.

Must-try during day: Nutty Monkey waffle featuring homemade salted caramel and whipped creme, walnuts, cinnamon, bananas.

Must-try at night: Limeberry Vodka cocktail made with homemade strawberry syrup or the Cold Brew Martini made with their own Panther Coffee cold brew.

Open: 8 AM – 1 AM Monday - Thursday & Sunday. 8 AM – 3 AM Friday - Saturday.

Location: The Village Mall, J.E. Irausquin Blvd 348A, Palm Beach, Aruba

Contact: +297 586 6999 | www.craftaruba.com | FB Craft Aruba | IG craftaua



aged.

Founded in: April 2017

Concept: This small wine bar offers a great selection of wines, craft beers and wine bites such as cheese platters, Charcuterie (cold cuts), and jams. The bar is a vaping lounge as well. Don't expect thick smoke, only vaping is allowed.

Best feature: The extensive wine list, friendly local staff and good music.

Must-try: A nice Cabernet combined with their signature cheese platter. Try a different wine every Friday, during their all night Happy Hour that starts at 5 PM when wines by the glass are \$4 - \$6.

Open: 4 PM -11 PM, Monday - Thursday
4 PM - 1 AM, Friday - Saturday
Closed on Sunday

Location: Renaissance Marketplace, Oranjestad, next to Starbucks, across from Cinemas

Contact: +297 588 2055 | www.agedbar.com | FB agedbar

The Wine Room

Founded in: June 2012

Concept: A small wine bar that offers an amazing selection of wines from an a la cart wine menu, paired with a tapas menu. In addition you can make reservations in advance for a tasting package that includes a wine tasting and a full meal, matching the wines (max 10 people). The bar also offers a 'Wine Gathering', a 2-hour wine serving and tapas buffet at USD \$55 for small groups and parties (25-30 people). Lastly, you can book a Wine Dinner for Two, a 3-course steak meal paired with wine.

Best feature: All wines are hand-selected by the owner many of which you don't get anywhere else on the island. What really sets this place apart is the personalized service and guidance from knowledgeable host Monrick throughout the tasting process.

Must-try: The very nice taste of the Carmenere grape, "the lost grape" that originally grew in France but got lost through a disease. Years later the same grape was discovered in Chile as some clones from France were saved and brought to Latin America.

Open: 7 PM – 12 midnight, Tuesday – Saturday

Location: L.G. Smith Blvd #126 Suite #1, Oranjestad, in the back of the Antraco Mall

Contact: +297 737 0019 | www.thewineroomaruba.com | FB LgSmithBlvd





If you are in the mood for a truly local experience, visit one of Aruba's most authentic café's, like the iconic Djiespie's Palace. At the far end of downtown's Main Street in Oranjestad, which can be reached either by foot or by tram, you will be rewarded for your journey with chilled drinks, hot snacks and ice cream. At the end of the Main Street, overlooking the Plaza Nicky Habibe, Djiespie's has been operating its cosy corner-café for almost three decades. A local meeting place for -mainly- Aruba's older generation, this small eatery & bar is also a favorite with the youth for their mouthwatering fresh tamarind juice as well as the best pastechis (small local snacks, fried dough with a cheese, ham & cheese, meat or chicken filling) and hot dogs on the island.

Named after the nickname of the original owner, Djiespie, meaning naughty child in the local language Papiamentu, the place has always been family-run by Arubans. When Djiespie's good friend Zepp Wever, an undertaker, moved his funeral home to another part of the island in 1990 he insisted Djiespie would take over the adjacent 'refresceria', a café offering small snacks, ice cream and drinks, facing the Main Street.

A Local Favorite

Djiespie's Place - best hotdogs & pastechis in Aruba

After refurbishing the place, replacing the wooden bar for a long counter with red vinyl swivel stools, putting in a new floor with colourful mosaic and Formica tables, locals stayed loyal to this, the interior matched its gorgeous Art Deco façade. Djiespie and his wife served drinks and snacks diligently, until Djiespie got sick and his wife retired. Their two daughters, Susy and Setty, took over, along with Aunt Rita, and her two daughters, Lucia and Diana. The five women were faced with hard times as the Main Street was under construction for many years, which kept their customers and passers-by from stopping by.

Setty then talked to one of her loyal regulars, Etty Toppenberg, one of Aruba's greatest all-round singers. Etty offered a helping hand, by showing up Friday evenings around 7 PM with his guitar and amplifier, to sing and entertain. Ever since Etty first sang in front of Djiespie's four years ago, his performance has transformed into a weekly event, attracting a fun crowd of locals and visitors.

At Djiespie's Place the owners are proud to be a fully Aruban family business, that has kept and cherished its heritage and simple drinks & snacks menu, to the joy of many. So, when you are exploring the downtown area, admiring many historical buildings with interesting architecture, or on a shopping spree, make sure to make a stop at Djiespie's Place for a local experience. On Friday night, when leaving nearby El Gaucho Restaurant, Maroc, or Wilhelmina Restaurant after dinner, you can hear Etty sing and play. Just follow the music literally around the corner and join the local crowd, have a seat and a drink, or dance to the tunes of upbeat salsa and more.

Djiespie's Place

Caya Betico Croes (Main Street) 101, Oranjestad

Online: [Facebook.com/djiespie/](https://www.facebook.com/djiespie/)

Open: Mon-Thu + Sat 5:30 am – 4:00 pm

Friday 5:30 am – 11 pm

(free concert Etty Toppenberg 7-10 pm)

Sunday closed

Serving: Pastechi, hot dog, kroket, empanada, sandwiches; fresh juices, smoothies. On Friday night the typical 'Johnny Cake' is available.





Explore Aruba's
surprising local
dining options
and scenic bars
& restaurants



One happy
island

For more information
please visit aruba.com