

Foodorama

Article # 7: Fires in California and Vegan Food



By Foodorama, November 17, 2018

Hi everyone. After spending 5 days in Palo Alto where we celebrated Halloween, it was time to hit the road again. We then joined Route 1 in Monterey, and then continued our route south to Ventura where we had to change our plans because a huge forest fire was devastating the area (including the town of Malibu). Have you heard about it in France? For more than a week a huge forest fire has burned more than 140 acres and left many dead here. 50,000 people had to be evacuated and leave their homes. Today, it is still not completely extinguished. This fire is between us and Los Angeles where we go.



The detour (for cars) recommended taking Highway 101 between Ventura and Los Angeles. This portion of the highway is not accessible to bicycles. So we hitch-hiked with our bikes and the hitchhiking (even with our two big bikes and luggage) works very well in the US. They have big cars (pick up) with a grab at the back very convenient to put our bikes!



The first person who stopped to pick us up was an avid supporter of Trump and proudly carries two "Trump Make America Great Again" flags in the back of his car. Even if we do not necessarily share his opinions, he helps us willingly and allows us to leave Ventura and reach Thousand Oaks on the road to Los Angeles, city infamous for being the place where a shooting took place there a week ago and the fire started almost at the same time. On the road, we can see the fire in the distance and the huge smoke escaping from it. It is impressive, the hills are completely burned, a few houses on the side of the road are charred and maintenance workers are repairing electric pylons fallen from the fire. We meet firefighters blocking access to the road we had to take by bike.



Just behind this truck on the left the road is blocked and we can see a burnt hill in the distance. 20 minutes later we are again caught by a new pick up (anti Trump this time;) who add to go to this area affected by the fires, to bring food to animals from surrounding farms that were also evacuated ... He made a donation appeal on Facebook and raised \$ 16,000 to provide food to these collected animals. We could say that we must first think of people who have been displaced but there is already a real solidarity that is organized here to support them and the insurance will pay the burned houses. He could not pass the fire brigade to bring the food and had to turn around, but at least he did not come for nothing because it allows us to reach Los Angeles safely!



Arrived at L.A. we resume our filming on sustainable food and our subject in California is vegan and vegetarian. But do you know the difference between the 2? We first interview Mollie Angelheart, the director of Sage vegan Bistro in Los Angeles. We film her cooking and she invites us to eat. She uses the pulp of Jackfruit (an Asian fruit) to mimic the flesh of the chicken. She makes us fried cauliflower, a Thai salad with tofu and a dish with Jackfruit, very good but very very spicy! We begin to feel the influence of Mexican cooking.



The next day we meet Zena Scharf, a talented chef, who has worked for 2 years for Jay Z and Beyoncé. She tells us that Jay Z has been vegan for a long time and that Beyoncé wanted to follow a Vegan diet for a while in order to lose weight ... Once again after filming we can taste the wonderful meal she has prepared for us. On the menu that day, a dish with a vegetable steak (made of a Japanese pumpkin, mushrooms and onions), rice and quinoa, pan-fried cauliflower, marinated vegetables, onions and even fruits (pomegranate and Khaki). Probably a dish she used to do for Jay Z and Beyoncé. To be honest, we had a blast! It was sweet / salty, hot and cold in the same dish and many different tastes. We post the recipe soon!



We end this episode on vegan / vegetarian gastronomy with the inevitable "Impossible Burger". This is the vegetarian burger everyone is talking about here and we had to try it. The steak inside is meatless but the taste and texture really make you think of meat.



Mexico is reaching out to us. We will spend a few weeks in Baja California (Mexico) and it may be more difficult for us to have internet but we will do our best to keep you informed! See you soon!
Sylvain and Kalima