

## **Veggie, Vegan or a Triple-Meat Bacon Cheeseburger?**

Narrator: Marcus offers couch surfing in his flat in Bergen. Though his flat is small, he likes to welcome people from all over the world to spend a night or two at his place. He is fond of foreign languages, curious about new people and cultures and takes pride in his home town – Bergen. By accommodating his guests, he also knows that he can visit their homes any time. To make his guest feel welcome he always prepares a meal the first night. Now he has prepared a vegan meal for Thomas, a 19-year-old student from Edinburgh.

Marcus: Welcome to my modest flat. Please make yourself at home.

*Thomas: Thank you. I really look forward to getting to know Bergen. What is that lovely smell?*

Markus: (*laughing*) I always like to prepare something for my guests. On Facebook you told me that you only eat vegan food. Even if I prefer vegetables myself, I must admit that I had to check several recipes before I made up my mind. It was more difficult than I'd imagined to find something totally free of animal products. Luckily, Jamie Oliver came to my rescue.

*Thomas: Right, the super-chef has been more concerned about superfood and family food recently. He really made an effort to make British school meals healthier, too. It's high time that we're more concerned about what we eat and how it affects our health.*

Markus: Well, I hope you'll like my choice – houmous – and I've prepared vegetables for dipping. Here in Norway we are very fond of our sour cream, but I remembered at the last minute – no animal products.

*Thomas: I didn't expect that you'd make so many preparations for my visit, but I really appreciate it. Being a vegan is an important matter for me personally. I can't stand that any animal – big or small - should suffer for my sake.*

Markus: I know, right? Well, there are a lot of things I'd like to tell you about Bergen, you know, and you might have some questions for me as well.

*Thomas: Mm (enjoying the food), these carrot sticks are so-o crunchy, and houmous is a favourite.*

Markus: I thought most Scots were meat lovers, isn't haggis your national dish?

*Thomas: That's right - can you believe it? Do you know what it consists of – the heart, liver and lungs of sheep? Luckily young folks now are more concerned about what they eat.*

Marcus: Same thing in Norway, a lot of young people here prefer vegetarian food. But if you think haggis is distasteful, I don't know if our "smalahove" is any better. If you take a stroll down to "Bryggen" – the quay in Bergen – you'll see how they prepare it. They smoke the head of a sheep, and the eye is considered a real delicacy!

*Thomas: Are you a vegetarian, Marcus – isn't Bergen all about fish? I've heard about the famous fish market.*

Marcus: I think I am entitled to call myself a veggie even if I eat fish. I know this is a big debate, though. Since I was a toddler, I've always loved fish, and growing up in Bergen – I don't know how you could have survived if you had refused to eat it. Meat, on the other hand

– I can do without. My last guest, Sam from Colorado, only demanded hamburgers. I had to cheat a bit – I prepared him a triple cheeseburger, but a veggie burger for myself.

*Thomas: So now you've accommodated a meat lover **and** a vegan. What do you do if your next guest is a freegan?*

Marcus: *(laughing...)* Well, I guess I will have to check bins and dumpsters - hospitality is important, you know.

### **Explanations:**

**Freegan** = a person who rejects consumerism and seeks to help the environment by reducing waste, especially by retrieving and using discarded food and other goods.

**Couch surfing** = A website and service that provides a platform for members to "surf" on couches by staying as a guest at a host's home, host travellers, meet other members, or join an event.

**Vegetarianism and Veganism** in a Nutshell. The basics: **Vegetarians** do not eat meat, fish, and poultry. **Vegans** are **vegetarians** who abstain from eating or using all animal products, including milk, cheese, other dairy items, eggs, honey, wool, silk, or leather.

**Veggie** = short, informal form for a vegetarian or a vegetable.