

# THE VINSON VIEW

Quality maniac and master shopper Nick Vinson on the who, what, when, where and why



## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

**Maisie Café**  
A Parisian coffee shop and juice bar serving a vegan, gluten-free, organic menu.  
32 Rue du Mont Thabor, [maisiecafe.com](http://maisiecafe.com)

**Calgary Avansino**  
A contributing editor to British Vogue, health and lifestyle guru Avansino offers up recipes, tips, videos and Instagram inspiration.  
[calgaryavansino.com](http://calgaryavansino.com)

**What The Health**  
A 2017 pro-vegan documentary written and produced by Kip Andersen.  
[whatthehealthfilm.com](http://whatthehealthfilm.com)

**Yeotown Kitchen**  
The new London outpost of contemporary North Devon detox retreat Yeotown.  
40-42 Chiltern Street, [yeotownkitchen.com](http://yeotownkitchen.com)

**Yotaro**  
A family-run tempura restaurant that has been serving heavenly bites since 1981.  
4-11-4 Roppongi, Minato, Tokyo

## 01 Latest squeeze

Picky Nicky's growing desire for a plant-based diet

I have always been something of a picky eater, especially when it comes to meat and poultry. Like everything else, my rule is 'less but better', so no intensively-reared factory-farmed muck for me; in its place, I eat just a little of the good stuff. The same goes for fish - I won't touch anything farmed.

Following a series of back-to-back visits to Paris' Maisie Café (where I discovered an alternative to the usual fashion week fare of bread, butter, pastries, cheese and chips), coupled with a few lunches at Yeotown on London's Chiltern Street, a daily intake of 'plant-based' Instagram posts by journalist Calgary Avansino and, most importantly, watching the new pro-vegan documentary *What the Health* on Netflix, I beefed up the plant-based part of my diet and eliminated a hefty number of animal products.

I started my new regime with a 12-day stint at the Mayr Clinic in Austria, chewing my way through a vegan diet, and now I only eat meat, fish and dairy three or four times a week. It took a few chats with my doctor and my personal trainer, plus some fresh schooling in the kitchen, to get going, but I soon discovered, among other things, that it's much easier to make my own fresh almond milk than I thought, and that all protein originally comes from plants. Of course, this is just me exercising my quality maniacal tendencies and being obsessive

about good health. But if you eat less flesh, then the pleasure on the palate is actually heightened. I am happy to swap a T-bone steak or veal cutlet for a 17g serving of beef sashimi at Tokyo restaurant Yotaro in Roppongi. The beef, which comes from Yamagata prefecture, is served raw, lightly torched and wrapped around some rice, and the pleasure per gram is off the scale.

I am never going to become a 'meat is murder' animal rights activist. When some vegans recently blockaded the meat and fish counter at my local supermarket, I actually felt like buying both just to spite them. I also love fur and leather, partly for their durability. (Yotaro, incidentally, has been using the same saddle leather Mario Bellini 'Cab' chairs for 37 years.) But I am far from being the only person now switching to a more plant-based diet - it's a major shift in consumer behaviour. And although I eat out a lot, both for work and pleasure, I have no intention of dragging anyone involuntarily to a vegan eatery. But the dining scene needs to move with the times. Pick up any breakfast menu and you will find it's almost entirely based on eggs and dairy, while most restaurant menus are too heavy on the meat and fish. An offering of salad is fine in the summer at lunch, but side dishes are just not a satisfactory option. It's time for the hospitality sector to step up to the plate. ★



## 02

### Gift aid

My current favourite hotel gift shop is Les Ateliers Courbet at Miami's Four Seasons Surf Club, which stocks the likes of Venini, Lobmeyr and Puiforcat. [ateliercourbet.com](http://ateliercourbet.com)



## 03

### Strap lines

I love Rick Owens' twist on the Birkenstock Arizona, in hairy cowhide with extended straps, available throughout March at Birkenstock Box in LA. [birkenstock.com](http://birkenstock.com)