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## new to the raw lifestyle?

If so, there is a wealth of information within easy reach. From magazines like Purely Delicious to dedicated Web sites, online classes and webinars, how-to books, raw food coaches and even accredited learning programs, there is no shortage of good information out there. But what about the actual food and day-to-day food preparation? How can you efficiently make a transition from cooked to raw, without spending every waking moment in the kitchen? Does the time factor and learning curve make the lifestyle impractical for you? Luckily, there are now almost as many prepared food choices as there are opportunities to learn about the raw food diet. Join us as we explore a few options to make your transition seem a bit less daunting.

When you say "convenience foods" to a raw foodist, you'll usually get a look bordering on contempt. You may even have to endure a recitation of the evils of saturated fats, preservatives, sugar and salt. Convenience foods are, after all, designed to shorten meal preparation time at home and we've become used to thinking that essentially translates to inferior ingredients and compromised health.

But a glance at the list of new products introduced at events such as the Natural Food Expo will reveal a landscape that is changing – and includes a good many raw vegan options. In many instances new product categories include ingredients that can be used in at-home raw food preparation. The recently expanded line of goods by **Coconut Secret** – featured on page 32 of this issue – is an example. In other cases the products are ready-to-eat creations that were developed to save you time yet still allow for organic, preservative-free, raw food options.

In this installment of Raw 101, we've taken a few of the most popular food categories and assembled some resources for you to check out. This list is by no means exhaustive, nor is it intended to serve as an endorsement of certain producers over others. Space does not allow us to include the many, many wonderful food products that are offered on a small, local level, often at raw restaurants or cafés or perhaps at farmers' markets and street fairs. This is all good news, as it wasn't that long ago that finding even a few raw prepared goods would have been a challenge. Now we have

a variety of choices and it makes good sense to take advantage of them. It's smart to buy packaged granola when you're too busy to get to the store for ingredients. You are not a raw reject if you buy your flax crackers rather than make your own. Think of these store-bought goodies as a chance to inspire yourself to experiment with new flavors too: Who knows, maybe you will be the next raw food mogul!

### Bars

Energy bars are great to have on hand for occasional "snack attack" emergencies and can double as a dessert (dollop one with a scoop of raw vegan ice cream and drizzle with sauce!). Calorie counts can range from quite low to very high depending on the ingredients used. Some bars are made primarily from nuts and dates; others incorporate seeds, dried fruits and liquid sweeteners.

**Pure Raw Bar** – Six flavors including wild blueberry and trail mix. Sign up for the company's Pure Circle online to get special offers. [ThePureBar.com](http://ThePureBar.com)

**Raw Crunch Bars** – Not the usual nut/date approach; these bars do have a satisfying crunch to them and an abundance of seeds. [RawCrunchBar.com](http://RawCrunchBar.com)

**Raw Revolution Bars** – Widely available; the company does a lot of partnering with events and organizations. [RawIndulgence.com](http://RawIndulgence.com)

**Go Raw** – Crisp bars in flavors such as pumpkin, banana bread and spirulina. The company also makes cookies, granola, chocolate and sprouted seeds. [GoRaw.com](http://GoRaw.com)

### Chocolates and Confections

Whether you buy into chocolate (cacao) being a super food or not, these treats are tasty and also make

thoughtful gifts. Some require refrigeration in warmer weather. Editor's note: Please check to see if your favorite brand uses fairly traded and sourced chocolate.

**UliMana Truffles** – Also see the brownies, hot chocolate mixes and spreads. [UliMana.com](http://UliMana.com)

**Oasis Living Cuisine** – Beautiful and elegant chocolate truffles. Also see their cookies and other treats. [Oasis-Pa.com](http://Oasis-Pa.com)

**Gnosis** – Entirely handmade (no machines!); private-label products available. [GnosisChocolate.com](http://GnosisChocolate.com)

**Sacred Heart** – Heart-shaped rich bars. Also, truffles and bon bons. Features include unique add-ins such as lime, ginger and lemon grass. Private labeling available. [SacredChocolate.com](http://SacredChocolate.com)

**Divine Organics** – Raw cacao brittles: crunchy cashew, maca mulberry, pistachio and seven other flavors. [TransitionNutrition.com](http://TransitionNutrition.com)

**NibMor** – Cold-pressed, organic, kosher dark chocolate. Original, almond, crispy and "extreme" options. [NibMor.com](http://NibMor.com)

**Earthsource Organics Righteously Raw** – Truffle-like bars with uncommon flavors such as acai, goji and caramel. [EarthSourceOrganics.com](http://EarthSourceOrganics.com)

**Good Stuff by Mom and Me** – Bars, brownies, cereals, muesli bars, doughnut holes. [GimmeGoodStuff.com](http://GimmeGoodStuff.com)

**The Greenwood Kitchen** – Ten flavors of macarons, including peanut butter, mint chip and chai tea. The company also makes granola crisps. [GreenwoodKitchen.com](http://GreenwoodKitchen.com)

**Raw Ice Cream Company** – Coconut and cashew based, the ice creams and ice cream sandwiches are a treat. [RawIceCreamCompany.com](http://RawIceCreamCompany.com)

**Simple Squares** – A sweet and salty



Top: Raw Crunch Bars. Raw Living Ice Cream. Left: Raw Living Ice Cream. Right: Zukay Salsa.

cashew and almond blend; unusual flavor options include rosemary and sage. SimpleSquares.com

#### **Granola and Cereals**

Don't just think of granola as a breakfast food – it also makes a travel-friendly snack, topping for ice cream or an addition to your fruit parfait! Some granolas are oat-based; others are made from sprouted buckwheat groats. Mix and match different nut milks to see what brings out the flavors best.

#### **Earthling Organics Original**

**Almond** – This is well known to many. The company also makes unique and crunchy bars such as masala chai and goji. EarthlingOrganics.com

**Laughing Giraffe** – Unique flavors

such as pineapple coconut macadamia. The company also makes delicious macaroons. TheLaughingGiraffe.com

**Kookie Karma** – Flavors such as almond crunch grawnola. The company also makes bread and crackers. KookieKarma.com

**Kaia Foods** – Cereal made with sprouted buckwheat groats; also try their fruit leathers. 1% of sales go to fight hunger. KaiaFoods.com

#### **Superfood Cereal from Living**

**Intentions** – Enhanced with such ingredients as camu camu, maca and spirulina. Shop.LivingIntentions.com

**Ruth's Chia Goodness** – An alternative to nutty granola cereals, this is a plainer approach. Can be dressed up to taste. Ruth's also makes hemp bars, tortilla chips. RuthsFoods.com

#### **Nuts and Butters**

While nut butter is not difficult to make, sometimes it just tastes better when someone else does the work! Some companies offer unique blends and mixtures for additional variety.

**Artisana** – Nut butters include almond, cashew, coconut, macadamia, pecan, walnut, as well as tahini and some blends. PremierOrganics.com

#### **Living Intentions Gone Nuts!**

Seasoned raw and sprouted nuts and nut blends. Also makes cereal, flour, trail mix. Shop.LivingIntentions.com

**Living Tree Community** – A variety of nut and seed butters, pesto and other prepared raw products such as rolls, truffles and dried fruits. LivingTreeCommunity.com

#### **Sauces and Dressings**

Condiments are now more widely available than ever and having a couple of jars on hand can help make mealtime a snap. Note that many of

these products require refrigeration.

**Zukay Live Foods** – Salad dressings, salsas and relishes, all fermented and containing live probiotics. Zukay.com

**Rejuvenative Foods** – Extensive line of cultured vegetables, salsa, kim-chi and more, as well as nut and seed butters. Rejuvenative.com

**Foods Alive** – Flavorful flax oil and hemp oil dressings. Also makes flax crackers in unique flavors such as maple & cinnamon and BBQ. FoodsAlive.com

#### **Crackers and Breads**

Breads and crackers can be a saving grace during the initial transition to raw food and beyond. Each of the purveyors below has a unique take on their creations. What's the harm in test-driving them all?

**Love Force** – Extensive line of dense bread "slices" and chewy energy bars. Sample/variety packs are available. LoveForce.net

**Rayo de Sol bread** – A chewy texture makes this mini loaf bread unique. Dried fruit is used as a sweetener. Savory and sweet flavors available. RawRayodeSol.com

**Brads Raw Chips** – The different texture comes from a blend of sprouted buckwheat and ground flax. Eleven flavors in all, including hot red bell pepper, which is great with guacamole. BradsRawChips.com

#### **And More**

**One Lucky Duck** – Online store with a variety of ingredients and premade snacks. OneLuckyDuck.com

**Blue Mountain Organics** – A family of raw, organic and sprouted products. Nut butters, dehydrated treats, frozen desserts. BlueMountainOrganics.com

**Pure Raw Cafe** – Prepared gourmet meals and cakes delivered right to your door. PureRawCafe.com