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Post: Vegan fast food experience - part 1 - story



Created by [Brittany Bunk](#) on 07-Nov-2021

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Content

This is the first time writing about what I'm eating while eating it!

I missed out on the Beyond™ The Original Orange Chicken when it came out here - they sold out. I let McDonald's eat its words when they said they'll never go vegan and fought off Beyond Meat with the McPlant and blamed them. The McPlant came to the UK and I just felt it needed to come to where I live. I got so lucky I got my first and 2nd chance!

The McPlant came to where I live and the Beyond™ The Original Orange Chicken made a comeback. Beyond Meat just needs to go into full-force. They're in round 2, no more 'sampling' - it's real this time!

After buying the Beyond Meat stock once again and the shares loaded in my account, I was excited and pepped for this moment. The story begins here:

Panda Express

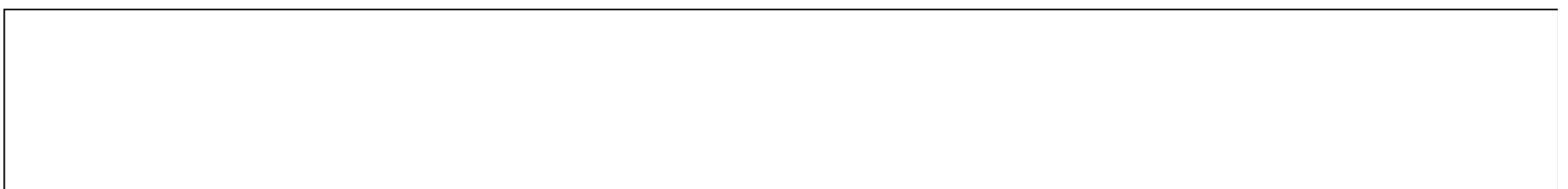
The Panda Express I went to was large and welcoming of a store front. I liked how they have Lychee soda - so LA being exotic and cool. There was a line, so while I waited, I looked around and behind me the people seemed like they wanted to talk. So I asked them if they're excited about the Beyond™ The Original Orange Chicken. They told me they already had it and didn't like it, because it had a fishy taste and they don't want that in their chicken. I personally really dislike fishy tastes, so I'm glad they explained that to me. They said the rest of it was the same, so maybe it was contamination or something. When it finally came almost my turn, I kind of got saddened by having the shrimp right in front of me. I haven't been to a Panda Express or a McDonald's in forever, so it was off-putting (like put that in the back or something). I checked out the Beyond™ The Original Orange Chicken and it looked like tater tots. Or tempeh. It was really funny and thought it was kind of like a joke. So I wondered why they put it out. However, people were eyeing it and the employees would explain to them what it is and say there's real meat to give omnivores a dilemma in picking what to eat. I can't eat soy or wheat, especially soy - it makes me really ill. So I can't give a taste test on it. Luckily the person I spoke with explained what it was like, so I didn't have to try it out myself.

The employee scooping out the Beyond™ The Original Orange Chicken for me confused me. First off, the Beyond™ The Original Orange Chicken is at a premium, a \$1 more for the al a carte. So what's funny is they asked me if I wanted to make it cheaper by making it a combo. I said 'it'll be free?'. They said, no, it costs money. So I wondered why they said it'll be cheaper when it's going to be more. I really didn't want to know what that was beyond that. Well it was expensive - I think \$5.50 for a tiny box. I left and went onto the next place.

McDonald's

This is where it started to go wrong: Google gave me directions that I interpreted incorrectly and ended up on the street instead of the freeway checking my phone where I was, because the street kept changing. By the time I figured out how to get back on the freeway, I was 2 exits away. That was funny. I felt it was a chill weekend, so I was in no rush and got to enjoy all the wonders of the street I was on - busy with some unique drivers, very quiet - no loud music, and lots of stores along the way popping out. On the freeway, it felt really welcoming, protected by Boeing and Raytheon as really large buildings that stuck out. I went to the automated machines and they seemed confusing, as it didn't look vegan. There was a long wait it looked like to pick up orders. So I waited and when I asked finally, they said the McPlant isn't vegan. Such a letdown. Well since I can't have gluten, pretty much half the burger was removed by the time I was finished ordering on the automated machines. For the same price. There was so many animal products, that I was lucky to pick the 'other', so that the McPlant popped up automatically (as I couldn't find it under the burgers).

While waiting for maybe 20 minutes (I can't remember how long), the music and place was very Disney-like, because it's around Disneyland. The atmosphere, like many omnivore places, feel like it's designed by and for an older generation (maybe because they eat more real meat). There were what looked like astronauts there (they were dressed up like they came out of JPL or something - they must've worked at Boeing or one of those). It reminded me of the song: We are all made of stars by Moby (a vegan singer) or the Cigna commercial 'go you':





Anyway, when I got my order, it was way too much packaging for what I got (later I found out the packaging is really cool, kind of designed by engineers with the bottom that has a grip and latches on the side - nifty). The patty looks scrawny - in my head, I'm like 'where's the beef?'. I normally go to Carl's Jr. anyway, so I decided I'll go there for the comparison. Well in LA, you make one wrong turn and you're in a totally different place. I used to freak out, but realize if you just turn in the right direction, it's actually really close by and easy to get around with. I made that one wrong turn and ended up in a split second at LAX. Who'd expect. I've driven from and to LAX, so I was comfortable to know where to go and what to do, but I didn't know it would be that far out. There was the pulling in feeling though, as I tried to escape before going into the tunnel - it was just pulling me in like a rip current. Then I remembered when I was a kid, I loved the tunnel, as it was bringing me back home (away from California, as I'm not native here). Now it was a place, now that I'm the driver, where I just wanted to get out of there. It felt like it didn't want me, and I didn't want it.

Well I was seeing airplanes - like I entered the Twilight Zone or something. Airplanes flying really close overhead. I didn't like how I was going too far out of the way, but the lights were so beautiful, I just wanted and decided to enjoy it. On the way back, there was an airplane with a big, shining light (it was night time and foggy), coming right at me. It was like the light at the end of the tunnel, giving you hope and shining the way. I worried any movement driving into other lanes would create a wind current to steer it off, so I drove right into it. I felt like it would crash into me, but it didn't. It just was like 'I needed you for that one moment and now you can go home'. I was just a morsel to the amount of people in that plane. It was really hard that the moment was gone and I just didn't belong there, but somewhere else, like I should be somewhere else. Another airplane was fighting through the fog and I was just mentally saying 'it's over there'. Feeling so done (i.e. not needed anymore there), it felt nice to help out someone who was wanted there.

As I went home, it felt a little depressing and an adventurous experience at the same time. It felt like the companies want to bring in vegan items, but at the same time don't want to and try to pressure you towards eating animal products. Like vegans aren't welcome there. I was upset, until I thought back to Panda Express and realize that it's the reverse for omnivores, where they're pressured to go vegan, so it's for them. The place felt very protected, and proud to fend off anything less than American, but at the same time I felt it wasn't directed towards me, but those that eat animal products - like they're trying to help me out, but because vegans are so small, they can't really. I decided to go to Carl's Jr., because I feel they know how it's done.

Carl's Jr.

I go here a lot, so it's typical of what I expect. The funny part is when I say not much packaging, they always give excessively. When you look at it, it looks done right - like they can treat vegans like everyone else - large patty, hearty, charbroiled - what's not to like? Well there is something to not like about it, and that's the real meat pieces that I have to pull off that're stuck to the Beyond Meat patty I want to eat.

Add new comment



Comments



Claire Smith

08-Nov-2021

oh wow, the McPlant isn't vegan and the patty is cooked on the same griddle as the meat burgers?! How horrible for you.

👍 | ↩️ • 1 Reply



Brittany Bunk

08-Nov-2021

the carl's jr patty was cooked on the same grill. I think the McPlant isn't - I didn't see any meat contamination. But yes, teh McPlant isn't vegan in California - only the UK.

So what was horrible is them not saying that in the press release rather than the meat contamination. As long as they warn me, I'm happy



