



# Our Hen House

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## Interviews with Piper Hoffman and Danny Carabano

By OUR HEN HOUSE

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*Following is a transcript of interviews with **PIPER HOFFMAN** and **DANNY CARABANO** conducted by **JASMIN SINGER** and **MARIANN SULLIVAN** of [Our Hen House](#), for the [Our Hen House podcast](#). The interview aired on Episode 226.*

JASMIN: Piper Hoffman of course is a columnist for Our Hen House. But she's also an animal law professor and an attorney and a very prolific writer and advocate for animals and for so many others. So we were thrilled when she joined us on Episode Four of our TV show.

MARIANN: So it's really a pleasure to have you here on the show, Piper.

JASMIN: Yes.

PIPER: Thank you!

MARIANN: I can't wait to have a conversation with you.

JASMIN: Welcome, Piper! Welcome to Our Hen House!

PIPER: Thank you. It's a pleasure to be here.

JASMIN: It's so wonderful to have you. Now, we promised the people, and those are the people, that you would talk about ants.

MARIANN: Because who doesn't want to hear about ants?

JASMIN: Who doesn't want to hear about ants? But I'm actually referring specifically to an article that you wrote for your column on Our Hen House. And I loved this article. It was called, "How Vegans Illogically Choose to Be Outcasts" or something. And it was not only a great title, but you start with this story of how you got an ant infestation. Tell us about it.

PIPER: I was alone at home one night after dark, and I heard this sound which turned out to be hundreds and hundreds of ants that had taken over my bedroom.

JASMIN: Oh, my God.

PIPER: So I called these...

MARIANN: Is this a common event in Brooklyn?

PIPER: I really don't think. I think it's just a common event in my house. I didn't want to kill them, but that didn't even occur to me at that moment. All I wanted was to get them out of my bedroom. And I wound up getting Raid and spraying them all.

JASMIN: Well, okay, first of all, didn't Alfred Hitchcock write a movie about this?

MARIANN: I think that was *Birds*, honey.

JASMIN: Oh, *Birds*, right. But second of all, I just think it's so interesting that you're actually thinking about this. So what did you find?

MARIANN: I think that's the only interesting thing here, is that a lot of people would have done exactly what you did and never give it another thought. But it is worth thinking about. It isn't necessarily worth doing something else, but maybe it is.

PIPER: It was very traumatic to see the aftermath and to see the ants writhing on the floor. And I felt very guilty, but on the other hand I didn't know what else to do.

JASMIN: Well, and the reason why you're such a thoughtful writer is because you use these as sort of springboards for discussing deeper issues of like, where is the line when it comes to our ethics, right? You went out and you spoke with some professionals, and they said, "We just assume that ants don't feel." Is that what they said?

PIPER: I did, yeah. I spoke with an expert, an academic, who studies ants, and he said, "We assume."

MARIANN: Assume.

PIPER: Theoretically.

MARIANN: Like, what point -- I mean, I hope they don't. I really do. I hope they don't.

PIPER: I really do.

MARIANN: But I don't know how you could just base it -- I mean, people for years have assumed that all animals didn't feel.

PIPER: Yeah.

MARIANN: It's pretty much accepted as nonsensical now, but --

JASMIN: And I was in third grade when I learned what happens when you assume!

MARIANN: But I'm not saying that what you did was in any way wrong. I just think that what's interesting about it is that it's a quandary. Like, living in the world is a quandary. And where to -- it's really using violence. Where do you use violence and not use violence? It's a choice we should make, not just to mindlessly do it. And I love thinking in that way.

PIPER: It's impossible to be a perfect vegan. You just have to do the best you can because we're surrounded by industries that use animal products.

JASMIN: But we don't want to use that as an excuse. Well, I can't be perfect, so I'm just gonna not do anything.

PIPER: Right, you have to do what you can.

MARIANN: You have to do your best.

JASMIN: Yeah, and speaking of violence and doing what you can, Passover is coming up. And I know this because my mother keeps calling me and saying, "Passover's coming up."

MARIANN: Her mother does not talk like that. I just want everybody to know that.

JASMIN: It's a good time to talk about kosher traditions and how they intersect with the welfare of animals because I think this is a hot topic for a lot of people. Piper, can you talk a bit about animal welfare as it relates to kosher?

PIPER: Sure. The laws of keeping kosher, which is called *kashrut*, are founded on a basic goal of animal welfare. So there's a principle in Judaism that you're not supposed to cause animal suffering. There's a quote in the Bible that God's tender mercies are on all his works, which includes animals.

MARIANN: That's really beautiful.

PIPER: It's a good one, and it gets cited a lot in discussions about vegetarianism. Perhaps one of the most disturbing things that's happening right now though in the world of kashrut is the intersection of the laws of keeping kosher with USDA regulations. That intersection is a catastrophe.

MARIANN: So this has to do with slaughter?

PIPER: Yes.

MARIANN: Okay.

PIPER: This is about slaughter, and this is an argument that nobody who keeps kosher should be eating meat. The laws of kashrut require that first you examine an animal for disease. Then you focus your attention on the animal, and you say a prayer, a blessing, for the animal that you really mean, that you really are thinking about. And then you kill the animal with one swift cut across the arteries.

JASMIN: Wow. I think we have some footage that we're playing too of -- what is this footage? -- this kosher facility. And it's really unbelievable to look at what's going on here. It's truly remarkable when people think that kosher slaughter began as something that was supposed to be kinder to the animals.

PIPER: Right, so there, what we just saw was that first cut. And now we have the second cut, which there is not supposed to be. Do you see that sawing action? So when you slaughter an animal in a kosher way, you check your knife first to make sure it is perfectly smooth because any notches would tear the flesh, which would hurt. So that first cut is supposed to kill the animal or render the animal insensible to pain. Instead, in that video, they were doing a second cut with a sawing motion, which tells me that's not a smooth knife and that animal was feeling pain, which, it's not kosher at that point.

MARIANN: So that's not even kosher. I mean, kosher slaughter, I know, has been controversial in Europe. Even when it's done right it's considered controversial because the animals aren't rendered unconscious, 'cause that's the other principle of kosher slaughter, that the animals aren't rendered unconscious. But that's even when it's done right, people have hesitations about it. But you're saying it isn't even done right.

PIPER: Right. When it's done right, they should be rendered unconscious. But the part about the USDA regulations is that the animal, before they are cut at all, are shackled by one ankle and hoisted into the air. And that is to make sure that the blood drains out of their body, that they're not on the floor in the blood of other animals. So in kosher slaughter, you don't do anything to render the animal insensible before you make a cut. So they hoist cows up by one ankle, which just tears the skin right off their ankles because that's a lot of weight to hang from one ankle. And then they do the cut. And because of that shackling and hoisting and the pain that that causes, it's hard to imagine how this could possibly comport with the laws of not causing animal suffering.

JASMIN: No kidding.

MARIANN: Of course, that machine we saw is an attempt to overcome that by turning the animal completely upside down. But it just all seems like it's not in the spirit.

PIPER: It's not. Instead of saying a blessing over every animal, in these kinds of slaughterhouses, they say one in the morning and that's it. They're done.

JASMIN: So what about the way animals are raised? Does kosher ritual or certification have anything to do with the way they're raised?

PIPER: Kosher, not necessarily, but Jewish law generally has a lot to say about it. There's a legend about a rabbi who, a calf approached the rabbi and seemed to be pleading for help. And the rabbi took the calf... lamb, might have been a lamb... and brought it back to the slaughterhouse. And for that, God punished him. And the reason was that this was a baby animal who had not had a chance to experience the pleasures of life. Well, animals in factory farming never experience the pleasures of life, and most of them are killed when they're very young.

MARIANN: They're babies. They're all babies.

PIPER: So that's not in the spirit of the law.

MARIANN: Yeah, it's really shocking. And I know so many people who just feel that if they're buying kosher, then they're safe, that the animals have been treated well. And they're really from the same factory farms that other animals are from, and the slaughter processes aren't well implemented. And people are deceived. Again, people are deceived. They think they're doing the right thing by buying kosher, but not necessarily.

PIPER: Definitely not.

JASMIN: And I have so many things I want to ask you about, Piper. But I'm just gonna switch gears for a minute because I know that in addition to writing about animal rights, you also write a lot about the childfree movement.

PIPER: I do.

MARIANN: Apparently you can't get enough grief for animal rights, and then you write about being childfree, which really puts people's backs up.

PIPER: Oh my goodness.

JASMIN: Because when you're childfree, it means you hate children, right?

PIPER: Oh, absolutely.

JASMIN: You just loathe them.

PIPER: It does not mean that at all.

JASMIN: So what does it mean? What is the childfree movement?

PIPER: The childfree movement is people who have decided that they don't want children. It's a conscious choice. And it doesn't mean that you don't like children. In fact, a lot of childfree people are in the childcare industry as teachers or daycare providers. They understand what a serious undertaking and responsibility it is to have children, and they've decided that's not something that fits into their lives.

JASMIN: I would like to know how this fits into your worldview of animal rights because I know that that's something you've actually written about for Our Hen House. You have an article that was called "When Vegans Have Children" and I am just dying to know how this intersects for you.

PIPER: Well, I think for me, one thing is that once you start questioning the norms of society and the expectations, you can't stop. It's addictive.

JASMIN: It starts with the ants.

PIPER: It starts with the ants, and then the cows, and you're onto children.

MARIANN: I know. Once you realize that everything you're taught wasn't necessarily right, you start to realize, well, really a lot of it -- when I think back to all that crap I learned in high school...

PIPER: Oh, tell me about it!

MARIANN: You realize a lot of it, people just take these things at face value. But once you start questioning them, they don't make sense necessarily, or at least for you.

PIPER: They don't make sense for everyone. And so once I started thinking about it, I realized that thinking about not having children felt like a relief.

MARIANN: Yeah, that is a sign you probably shouldn't have children.

PIPER: Yeah, it suggests you're on the right path.

MARIANN: If everybody who had that feeling didn't have children, we would be better off.

JASMIN: It just makes me sad that you have no fulfillment in your life, though, since you don't want kids. I'm gonna get hate mail.

PIPER: You wouldn't believe how often I hear that. People write me letters saying, "I feel so sorry for you."

JASMIN: Well, they say it for me about veganism. And as we're going to see for the rest of today's show, the last thing we are is deprived. But I want to go back to how it specifically relates to being an animal rights activist.

PIPER: Well, one of the primary things is that the more people you create, the more consumers of animal products there are. And a lot of vegans protest that their children will be vegan and will not be consuming any animal products. But there's no guarantee. Children often don't do exactly what their parents do. It's sort of a well-known trait of children.

JASMIN: I just want to point out something, that in case my mother is watching this, that Mom, I'm not straight, but I did wind up marrying a lawyer. Go on, Piper.

PIPER: You got half of it.

JASMIN: I did.

PIPER: So another problem with creating more people is that you create more consumers generally. And that has a big impact on the environment, which of course has an impact on animals, destroying their habitats, and especially if you do it in this country because first-world countries, developed countries, their residents consume more, by a lot, than people in third-world countries. So we think of, in Africa they're all having so many children. Well, it's our children who are the biggest problem.

JASMIN: Not my child!

MARIANN: One thing that really drives me crazy is -- this is on a more micro level, but people seem to think that having companion animals is some kind of practice session for having kids. And then if somebody gets pregnant, they're pushed to get rid of their companion animals.

JASMIN: Oh, this was another article.

MARIANN: "They've served their purpose, you should move on now." And yeah, you wrote another article about that that I just loved, and so many people loved that article and felt very vindicated by it.

PIPER: It's shameful to me how many animals there are in shelters who were put there because the family had a new baby.

MARIANN: It's ridiculous.

PIPER: And I don't know if they feel that the animal will attack the baby or that they just don't have time anymore? But it really shows a failure of responsibility. I mean, I worry about what kind of parents those people will be.

MARIANN: Seriously! I think people who would just get rid of their dog or their cat -- it especially happens to cats I think -- just because they're having a baby, I'm not sure they're the people who should be having babies. That seems like a very bad sign about their compassion.

PIPER: And the ones who got a dog to practice, and then get rid of the dog, it's like, you know what? Your experiment failed.

MARIANN: That's really true.

JASMIN: I would be worried about the baby attacking the cat personally. Maybe give back the baby? I'm gonna get in trouble.

MARIANN: And loads of people have wonderful -- my parents had a dog when I was born. It was a wonderful part of my babyhood and childhood. And also, it makes you less allergic as you grow up, when growing up with animals. So there's so many reasons.

JASMIN: There's so many things to talk about and I have to say that one thing we've been talking about on our show since we started is that Mariann has been dying to eat food.

MARIANN: That's not really just since the show started. That's since I started as a kid.

JASMIN: Well, no, since she started. And one thing that we are very good at is knowing the vegan restaurants in town. I know that later in a few minutes we're going to have Danny on from the V Spot. But before we have him on, Piper, we were talking and you said that in addition to all of the incredible vegan restaurants in Brooklyn and in the rest of New York City, there are so many wonderful vegan options available at non-vegan restaurants.

PIPER: There are.

JASMIN: And I said, "Do tell." And you said, "Well, I shall."

MARIANN: And I said, "Bring it on."

JASMIN: And what did you bring for us today?

PIPER: Well, to welcome you to Brooklyn, orient you to the treats that are available, you will notice from this that I have a sweet tooth. We have here a chocolate peanut butter rice crispy bar from a café called Has Beans on Fifth Avenue between 17th and 18th. We have banana bread from Naidre's, which I know on the Park Slope Stoop interview you mentioned that you like Naidre's, so that's banana bread and they're on Seventh Avenue between 11th and 12th Street. This is from L'Albero dei gelati. I don't speak Italian, but it's on Fifth Avenue between 4th and 5th Street. Every day they have a vegan cake. And they have vegan -- Mariann, vegan *gelato*.

MARIANN: Oh, come on. I don't even want to know about this.

PIPER: On a basis of almond milk.

MARIANN: Really!

PIPER: They do.

JASMIN: Are you kidding?

PIPER: I'm not.

JASMIN: These are just three examples. Throughout Brooklyn, and throughout really anywhere we've traveled far and wide, you can find vegan options when you look. But can we try some of this?

MARIANN: Yeah, let's dig in.

PIPER: I'm starting right now.

JASMIN: Yeah. All right, so I'm gonna go for that guy too.

MARIANN: No, I want this one.

PIPER: All right, there you go.

JASMIN: I love that this is available and that you sought this out. I'm excited about being your neighbor, Piper.

PIPER: Oh, it was like a 20-minute walk around the neighborhood, picked all these up, happened to pick up two of the rice crispy bar and have one myself.

MARIANN: Mm, this is unbelievable.

JASMIN: Okay. It's gonna get messy.

MARIANN: Oh, I want this one too.

JASMIN: Wait, the banana bread.

MARIANN: Oh yeah, we can't leave out the bread.

PIPER: No, I'm not done.

MARIANN: I'm gonna try the chocolate.

JASMIN: Actually we went to Naidre's the other day to get some vegan goodies for Mariann's class.

MARIANN: For my students.

JASMIN: For her students, because that's the kind of professor she is, Piper. Now you have to go buy it for your students.

PIPER: Don't tell my students that.

MARIANN: Sherry Colb, who teaches at Cornell Animal Law, she bakes for her students every week!

PIPER: Oh, that's just silly.

MARIANN: I felt so inadequate, so I went to Naidre's to buy some baked goods.

PIPER: I don't bake for myself even.

MARIANN: I know!

JASMIN: But I wanted to say that they were actually out of the vegan stuff because there was such a demand. And of course, we were annoyed, but then we were like, “oh, well that’s actually a good thing!”

PIPER: I wanted to bring you chocolate peanut butter cups, but they were out.

MARIANN: This is amazing.

JASMIN: So is the banana bread.

MARIANN: All right, I haven’t tried the banana bread. I have to try everything, Piper brought them.

PIPER: I’ll be offended.

JASMIN: Piper, we are so completely thrilled that you have been able to join us and to feed us. And we hope that you come back and bring us more food.

PIPER: I would love to.

JASMIN: And share more of your wisdom with us. And people could stay on top of your writing in a variety of places, including at [ourhenhouse.org](http://ourhenhouse.org). Click on Piper Hoffman for her column.

One of our favorite ways of creating change for animals is through the power of food. And nobody knows this better than Danny Carabano, who is the man behind V Spot here in Brooklyn. And he is going to be talking about for-profit activism and how to create some amazing food. And wow, I wish that this podcast was smell-o-vision or taste-o-vision because oh my God. This was such a dynamite meal.

Danny, we’re so thrilled that you’re here in this studio. We have been such a long fan of yours and of your food.

DANNY: Thank you so much.

JASMIN: Tell any viewers who are watching this who might have been living under a slab of tofu for the last eight years, tell us what V Spot is.

DANNY: Oh. V Spot’s a vegan restaurant in Park Slope. And we’re actually gonna be celebrating our eight-year anniversary coming this May, which is gonna be exciting.

JASMIN: Wow.

MARIANN: Happy eight years.

DANNY: Thank you so much.

MARIANN: That’s a long time.

JASMIN: Amazing. And what kind of food do you have at V Spot?

DANNY: Well, we do specialize in Latin cuisine, but I look at myself -- I'm half Colombian, but I look at myself more of like a Brooklyn boy. And in Brooklyn you have so much variety and so many different types of food, so we have Asian food, Latin food, Italian food, we do a great lasagna. We have raw nori rolls, gluten-free options, a very wide variety.

MARIANN: That's one of the things I love about V Spot. I love the fact that you can get Latin food there 'cause it's not that easy to get vegan food from Latin cuisines.

DANNY: That's true.

MARIANN: But you have so many other things as well. You really have that variety in your menu.

DANNY: Yeah, I really think I've focused the menu a lot around what I wanted. And I don't really want to eat burritos every day. I love them, they're delicious. Empanadas are delicious. But I want some variety. I want lasagna, I want eggplant pasta.

MARIANN: And you change the menu up a lot too.

DANNY: Definitely, yeah. Once I get bored of the food I change it up.

JASMIN: So you said you've had V Spot for eight years, which is unbelievable to me. And I just want to know how things have changed. How have you seen the desire for the food that you offer change in the past eight years?

DANNY: Well, one thing is that we are kosher-certified now, so there's definitely been a change there, and you see a lot of people who follow and eat kosher coming and eating at the restaurant. They see that that's another option for them. And the second thing is that I do wait tables at times and I hear Spanish being spoken every shift.

JASMIN: Oh, interesting.

DANNY: And Latin people are a little bit timid when it comes to vegetarianism. They don't quite understand it. And so they're almost a little afraid of it, as the concept of it is so new to them.

MARIANN: Well, maybe not anymore, though.

DANNY: Not anymore. But I go and I have to wait tables sometimes speaking in Spanish the entire time, which I love seeing that change. And I love seeing people from my own heritage coming and trying this new food and realizing, especially because Latin American people and men in general have a lot of problems with heart disease, high rates of heart disease, and they really need to make these kinds of changes in their diet. And the quality of the food in my opinion is the same. And I would say in the first two years I have had customers literally jog out of the restaurant when they saw that it was vegan 'cause they walked in accidentally. And one woman walked out and I was like, "Where are you going?" and she was jogging out of the restaurant and she was like, "I forgot I'm not hungry!"

JASMIN: And that's the reason why she could jog for the first time in 30 years because she actually ate a vegetable.

DANNY: Yeah, exactly.

MARIANN: I find this all the time. Like, people don't even realize that most of the food they eat is vegan, that an apple is vegan.

DANNY: Exactly. Guacamole is vegan, delicious.

MARIANN: Yeah, guacamole is vegan.

JASMIN: Piper, I know that you're also a resident of Park Slope, and that's where your restaurant is. Do you frequent it?

PIPER: I love the V Spot.

DANNY: Thank you.

PIPER: The V Spot catered my husband's 40th birthday.

JASMIN: Okay. Well, that tells you something.

PIPER: Absolutely.

MARIANN: So you do catering as well.

DANNY: Definitely catering, for sure, yeah.

JASMIN: Well, enough with this nonsense.

MARIANN: Seriously!

JASMIN: What do we have here today?

MARIANN: Yeah, what's going on?

DANNY: Okay, we have a lot, so we're gonna see. Maybe we'll start with the appetizer. Very popular gluten-free summer rolls here with our homemade peanut sauce.

JASMIN: I want that right now. Pass it over.

DANNY: Okay, let's do this.

JASMIN: Yeah, just do it.

DANNY: Make this happen?

JASMIN: I'm a summer roll ho.

MARIANN: Yeah, you really are.

JASMIN: I actually have made it my personal life's mission to walk around, not walk around, to --

MARIANN: We have so many bad summer rolls because you will order them no matter how awful they look.

JASMIN: I know. Well, I just want to try.

DANNY: That's right, the things you would do for summer rolls.

MARIANN: These are amazing.

DANNY: I'm gonna grab it, that's okay?

JASMIN: Yeah, so that's a peanut sauce? Yeah, grab it.

DANNY: All right.

JASMIN: We don't have germs because we're vegan.

PIPER: There's another one on there for Mariann.

DANNY: You don't know about my germs.

JASMIN: Yeah, I know, obviously we have one or two germs. But okay, so this is a summer roll.

DANNY: Yeah, this is a summer roll.

MARIANN: All right, can we dig in?

JASMIN: Yeah, I'm digging in.

DANNY: And it has avocado, mixed greens, has sesame seeds, and the peanut. I love the sauce, it's delicious. So many people forget how much a flavor of food comes from the sauces. It's like they think, "Oh I need to eat meat" or something like that. It's really not the case.

MARIANN: This is great peanut sauce.

DANNY: Thank you so much.

MARIANN: Do you think it's a problem that we were talking about food for the whole episode? No, I'm sure nobody minds.

DANNY: Put aside the "don't eat with your mouth full."

JASMIN: You brought up a very good point just then because a lot of times people are attracted to the sauce, and a lot of times it's not even --

MARIANN: This sauce is off the hook.

DANNY: Thank you so much.

JASMIN: It's not the meat. It's the sauce that it's in. And many times the sauces are totally vegan. But I know that, even though that is fantastic, and is definitely, definitely going to be in my --

MARIANN: I want to finish it.

JASMIN: Yeah, well, you can. But I want to know what else you have because one thing that I know V Spot is very, very well known for is empanadas.

DANNY: I see that. You kept them close to you.

JASMIN: I did.

DANNY: These are the Colombian empanadas. We do have a variety. We make a Philly style. We have a Jamaican style empanada. But these are the most popular where they're not exactly authentic Colombian empanadas. My grandmother gave me the recipe but I just kind of Americanized it, changed it up.

JASMIN: Okay.

DANNY: So let's try that out.

JASMIN: Yeah, I'm gonna show it a little bit.

MARIANN: These are beautiful looking empanadas.

JASMIN: Yeah.

DANNY: Thank you so much.

JASMIN: What are in these, Danny?

DANNY: That's homemade seitan, potatoes, carrots, corn, and cilantro.

JASMIN: Okay.

DANNY: And that's served with our very popular homemade salsa fresca. And do you want to give it a try?

JASMIN: Yeah, I absolutely do.

MARIANN: Yeah.

JASMIN: Okay.

DANNY: So all you need is a little bit of the salsa on it. I'm gonna reach across.

JASMIN: Now, tell me about this salsa because I've actually bought bottles of your salsa at V Spot. You sell this.

DANNY: Yeah. We've been bottling the salsa, and it's been going well. You can only buy it from in the restaurant, but it's super popular and authentic. That is for sure.

MARIANN: Is that it here? You have both a green and that?

DANNY: No, this is new. We have a special -- this is brand new.

MARIANN: Oh, really?

DANNY: And we have a special on the menu, and there are flautas. That's the next thing we can try out. Salsa verde, delicious, made with tomatillos.

MARIANN: Yeah, 'cause I've only ever had the red salsa. This is exciting.

DANNY: Yeah, this was on the menu for about three weeks now. I love it. This is especially -- it's new and it's something -- I wanted to try something new.

JASMIN: What's the difference between that and the other one?

DANNY: This is made from a green tomato and not just from a red tomato.

JASMIN: Oh. And tell me again what's in this delicious empanada that I just ate.

DANNY: Homemade seitan, potatoes, carrots, corn, cilantro.

JASMIN: Okay. And homemade seitan, wow. The cilantro's delicious. I always feel sad for people who can't eat cilantro. Like, I feel like I need to have a moment of silence for them. I'll fill that moment of silence with my share of their cilantro.

MARIANN: If you don't like cilantro, you really don't like cilantro.

PIPER: Can we roll the kitten video again?

DANNY: Yeah, exactly, we need a moment.

JASMIN: Yeah, so what else do you have here? This is just so -- I can't even believe how much you brought.

DANNY: Well, this is for a limited time only, I should say, the flauta. So that's gonna be on the menu for about two weeks as a special. I'm doing one special every two weeks, so two specials a month. This is again the homemade seitan, but it's ground up. We call it carne molida. And that's rolled in a corn tortilla, and that is topped with lettuce, of course vegan sour cream, avocado, and the salsa verde. I love the salsa verde.

JASMIN: Mm.

DANNY: And as well just showing some of the variety, we have the homemade lasagna, which is delicious, organic, whole wheat lasagna.

JASMIN: So what's the cheese that's in the lasagna?

DANNY: We do a homemade ricotta which is made from cashews and then we top it with Daiya cheese.

JASMIN: Oh, cashews are such a miracle food.

DANNY: It's true.

MARIANN: Yeah, they make the best cheese.

JASMIN: It's amazing that you could literally come up with a vegan version of every single kind of animal product out there. And I've had brunch over at V Spot and I just have eaten your delicious pancakes.

PIPER: Pancakes. I *love* the pancakes!

JASMIN: They have the right amount of fluffy. And now you're also doing Vegan Drinks, which is a new thing for Brooklyn. So Vegan Drinks.

DANNY: I've attended the New York City Vegan Drinks for some time, and seeing that it was an opportunity for people to both socially meet and kind of just share their experiences, maybe new restaurants they've tried or anything really, clothing, anything that's really vegan-related. Or some people were interested -- some people don't even have a lot of vegan friends. They want to make more vegan or vegetarian friends, or some people are just curious. And I'm also very interested in the business aspect because a lot of vegan, especially food-related people, owners, they don't really work together. And I feel like that's a pity and there's a lot we can learn from each other if we were to get together. And it's not even about the food. If you understand the law or finance, that's huge. Especially, we see the restaurant business in New York City is very difficult.

MARIANN: I love that idea, vegan businesses helping each other out. And you're also doing a comedy night, right?

DANNY: Yeah, the comedy night's for my brother. He is a partner at the restaurant, but he also does standup comedy for years now, and he hosts the show. It's the first Thursday of every month. Vegan Drinks is the second Thursday of every month, and the comedy show is the first Thursday. He sets up the entire show and brings in comedians. It's a great time, and it's just nice to especially have people come into the restaurant, try the food, but also we have our liquor license, which we've only I think we have the license since October, so that's a nice thing just to have people come in and just even just have a drink. Some people who would never even think about the food, enjoy a nice fresh juice cocktail, and then realize how delicious the empanadas are.

JASMIN: So are you saying that vegans have a sense of humor?

DANNY: Yeah, it's possible.

JASMIN: And are you saying that vegans can kick back and have a drink too?

DANNY: Yeah, have a drink or 12.

JASMIN: 12 is the happy spot. And this is my happy spot because I can't even tell you how happy vegan food makes me and this was certainly a delicious episode. And we certainly hope that those of you watching try V Spot for yourselves.

MARIANN: If they have any food left there.

JASMIN: Yeah. You really must. You have to.