



FOOL  
A  
CARNIVORE

THE GOOD, THE BAD  
AND THE NOT SO TASTY

The Best and Worst  
Meat Analogues





## The Good, The Bad, and The Not So Tasty Best and Worst Meat Analogues

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## The Good, The Bad, and The Not So Tasty Best and Worst Meat Analogues

After many years of testing and experimenting with all the meat analogue products I can find, I'm frequently asked what are the best and worst products. And of course, people also want the recipes to go along with them!

First, a word about a term with which you may not be familiar.

Meat analogues are my name for plant-based protein products that closely replicate the look, taste, and texture of meat. I like the term far better than fake meat, faux meat, meat substitute, pretend meat, or any of the other descriptions that are sometimes used to describe these products.

Here is a report on my current best and worst meat analogue products.

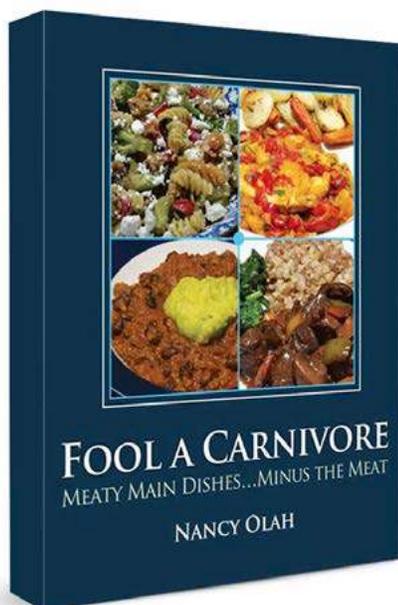
Keep in mind that products are constantly evolving and new ones appear almost every time I go shopping. So, I continue to taste, test, and critique – in search of plant-based protein that closely replicates the “real thing” and can fool my carnivores.

As I continue to work on my e-books, and develop new ways to please my meat-eating family and friends, I'll be using more of these products in upcoming recipes. So stay tuned to my blog at [FoolaCarnivore.com](http://FoolaCarnivore.com) to be the first to find out about new products and creative recipes that use them.

And as a bonus to this report, I'll be sending you some of my new recipes I've developed recently using these products . . . from the best category of course!

My mom always taught me to say something nice before I criticized, so I'm going to start with my favorite products – some of which are new to me, and weren't available when I wrote *Fool a Carnivore*.

So, in no particular order, here are my picks for the best and worst meat analogues. Note, none of these meat analogue products are affiliates, so I have no incentive or bias towards any of these products.



### Shameless Plug

Many of the recipes noted in this report can be found in my *Fool a Carnivore* cookbook. You can [purchase it here](#).



## The Good, The Bad, and The Not So Tasty Best and Worst Meat Analogues

### The Good

#### Gardein Lightly Seasoned Chick'n Scallopini

This is my go-to product for easy, weeknight dinners. In addition to my recipes in *Fool a Carnivore* for Chicken Piccata, Chicken Pomodoro, and Orange Mustard-Glazed Chicken with Roasted Red Peppers, I've created at least five new recipes in 2013 using this product.

They are low calorie, vegan, use non-GMO soy, and cook in a flash. What's not to like?

As a bonus, I'll send you several new recipes following this report.



#### Field Roast Smoked Apple Sage Sausage

Field Roast Smoked Apple Sage Sausage is almost a clone of smoked chicken sausage. We love its mild flavor and think that the easy way it crumbles is a plus in many recipes.

My Asparagus Risotto with Apple Sage Sausage and my Potato, Kale, and Sausage Gratin are two of our favorite ways to use this versatile product.

These recipes can be found in my *Fool A Carnivore* cookbook.



#### Tofurky Kielbasa

Of all the Tofurky Sausages, Kielbasa is still our favorite. Perhaps because my dad was Hungarian, I enjoy hearty delicious dishes from Hungary, Poland, Russia, Austria, and other eastern European countries.

This Kielbasa allows me to de-meatify those classic meat recipes!

Unlike many meat analogues, Tofurky Kielbasa stands up to longer cooking times in the slow cooker and maintains its taste and texture. My Polish Kielbasa with Sauerkraut and Classic Kielbasa (with Cabbage, Potatoes, and Mushrooms) are two of my family's favorites from *Fool a Carnivore*.





## The Good, The Bad, and The Not So Tasty Best and Worst Meat Analogues

### The Good (cont.)

#### Sweet Earth Chipotle Style Seitan

Sweet Earth makes a dynamite Chipotle Style Seitan that puts to shame the Smart Sausages Chorizo Style that I've used in several of my recipes.

The Sweet Earth Chipotle Style Seitan has a believable flavor and texture that my hubby carnivore told me was just what he craved.

Hey, they don't call seitan "wheat meat" for nothing!



#### Upton's Naturals Chorizo Seitan

When I wrote *Fool a Carnivore*, Upton's Naturals weren't available in my area, which is why I didn't include them in my cookbook. It's been a joy trying their products in my recipes over the past few months.

We loved Upton's Chorizo in my [Cannellini Chorizo Stew](#).

Because of the way that Upton's makes its seitan, I don't sauté it first, which eliminates a step and saves precious time.

It's easy to crumble Seitan Chorizo into the stew simmering in my slow cooker, and have a delicious meaty meatless meal ten minutes later.



#### Viana Veggie Gyros

Viana Veggie Gyros has just the right amount of spice and a great texture that actually gives you the mouth feel of meat.

For a quick weeknight meal, sauté onions, red, green, and yellow bell peppers, fresh oregano, cumin, and garlic before adding the gyros "meat" and then stuff the mixture in warm whole wheat pita bread. Serve with a fresh green salad, and a delicious homemade tzatziki sauce made with cucumber, plain Greek yogurt, lemon, dill, garlic, and sour cream. There's more [detail about it in my blog](#).

Can you say mmmm?





## The Good, The Bad, and The Not So Tasty Best and Worst Meat Analogues

### The Good (cont.)

#### Upton's Naturals Italian Seitan

This delicious “wheat-meat” product is perfectly spiced with garlic, fennel, onion, oregano, and black pepper. It has a meaty texture and gives my Bolognese sauce a hearty flavor.

Make sure you crumble it well for best results.

It is also a time saver. No need to sauté it first - just add it directly to your simmering sauce.

And, you'll be receiving my new recipe for Satan's Pasta using this terrific product since you've signed up for my newsletter!



#### Beyond Meat Chicken-Free Strips Grilled

Finding gluten-free meat analogues isn't easy. Which is why I give two thumbs up to Beyond Meat.

Of their three current varieties, the Grilled product is beyond doubt our favorite. I recently described it in my [Chicken Re-Imagined](#) blog post, when I made a re-engineered version of vodka pasta. Check out this cool link. If [Bill Gates](#) likes [Beyond Meat](#) well enough to invest in the company - who can doubt this up-and-comer's credibility?

Plus, I love their re-vamped tag line: “Tastes, Shreds, and Satisfies like Chicken - Without the Cluck!”

#### Quorn Chik'n Cutlets

Quorn makes wonderful products, so it was hard to just choose two.

Judging by frequency of use, the Cutlets won out.

I love them because they are soy-free, non-GMO, and are rich with mycoprotein (from a type of mushrooms). They have a great texture and taste, and if you're watching your weight, you can't beat 11 grams of protein in each 80-calorie cutlet.



They are also extremely versatile, with four recipes in *Fool a Carnivore*, and more coming your way soon!



## The Good, The Bad, and The Not So Tasty Best and Worst Meat Analogues

### The Good (cont.)



#### Quorn Turk'y Roast

My go-to meatless turkey is still Quorn Turk'y Roast.

I usually completely thaw it for 24 hours in the fridge, marinate the thawed roast for an hour or two in a mixture of fresh herbs (parsley, sage, rosemary, and thyme – just like the Simon & Garfunkel tune), low-sodium soy sauce, several whole garlic cloves, bay leaf, vegetable stock, and extra virgin olive oil, and then bake it in a small roasting bag.

Recently, I made the frozen Quorn Roast without removing the thin, film-like casing, or thawing it. I just pierced the casing 4 or 5 times and baked it for 50 minutes in a 425-degree oven as suggested on the package.

This preparation was super easy, and the finished product was every bit as good in taste and texture as the more labor-intensive method I've been using for years.

In fact, my carnivore husband thinks it is actually moister and more turkey-like than my previous preparation method. Plus, I loved not having to remember to thaw it first which means you'll be ready to eat in about an hour.

### The Not So Tasty

#### Field Roast Smoked Tomato Quarter Loaf

As much as I adore Field Roast Sausages, I found nothing to celebrate in the Smoked Tomato Quarter Loaf we tried a few months ago.

Funky flavor, chewy, and poor texture. We couldn't finish it.

It's always possible that it was handled improperly by the store. (I bought it frozen, but it could have been accidentally thawed in transit and re-frozen.) So, I'm tempted to try this product again – perhaps in its Wild Mushroom or Lentil Sage incarnations.



Field Roast makes many great tasty products, so I sincerely hope that our experience was a fluke!



## The Good, The Bad, and The Not So Tasty Best and Worst Meat Analogues

### The Not So Tasty (cont.)

#### Lightlife Smart Bacon



Although Smart Bacon is vegan, it has little resemblance to real bacon and has never fooled either of my carnivores.

It has a texture a bit like shoe leather and a taste that is more reminiscent of pepperoni than real bacon. The best thing going for it is that its label says “We do not use soybeans that were produced using biotechnology” – which begs the question on the source of the product’s other ingredients.

#### Lightlife Smart Sausages Italian Style

Although I featured these in several recipes in my cookbook, *Fool a Carnivore*, there are now many better Italian sausage products on the market (namely Field Roast Italian Sausage or Tofurky Italian Sausage), so I no longer buy or use Smart Sausages.



#### Lightlife Smart Sausages Chorizo Style

Ditto! Instead of using the Lightlife Smart Sausages Chorizo Style, I would choose Upton’s Naturals Seitan Chorizo, Sweet Earth Chipotle Style Seitan, or the Field Roast Mexican Chipotle Sausages if I need a spicy meat analogue for one of my recipes. My carnivores have told me that the Lightlife Smart Sausages Chorizo Style just don’t have the right flavor or a believable “mouth feel” in my recipes to fool their taste buds into thinking that they are eating meat.



We like many of Lightlife’s other products (Gimme Lean, Smart Cutlets, Smart Ground Original, and Smart Ground Mexican to name a few), but Lightlife’s sausage meat analogues are now on my growing “do not buy again” list.



## The Good, The Bad, and The Not So Tasty Best and Worst Meat Analogues

### The Not So Tasty (cont.)

#### MorningStar Farms Sausage, Egg, and Cheese Biscuits

Southerners love their meaty breakfast biscuits (didn't Bojangles start here?), which is why I thought that MorningStar Farms Sausage, Egg, and Cheese Biscuits would be a great idea. I've bought these on several occasions, each time hoping that they would taste better.

At my insistence, my son made the last one in the package a couple of mornings ago – and promptly threw it out. Don't think I'll be buying them again!



#### MorningStar Farms Grillers Recipe Crumbles

For more years than I can count, I used MorningStar Farms Grillers Recipe Crumbles in my chili, lasagna, pasta sauce, and many other dishes. My primary reason was that it was easy to find. (Major grocery store chains stock lots of MorningStar Farms products because they are part of the Kellogg's family.)



However, I don't like the fact that MorningStar Farms uses genetically modified soy and has vigorously opposed California labeling initiatives that would require manufacturers to indicate if they are using GMO ingredients.

Now, with products like Quorn Grounds, Lightlife Smart Ground, and Lightlife Gimme Lean Beef so easy to find, there are far better options easily available when you need a plant-based version of "ground meat." I won't be buying the Grillers Recipe Crumbles again – even if they are on sale!

#### Sophie's Kitchen Vegan Crab Cakes

I was excited about trying these crab cakes because several other Sophie's Kitchen products have been quite tasty.

I generally like Sophie's Kitchen products because they are gluten-free, soy-free, non-GMO, and vegan.

Unfortunately, my five years in Baltimore acquainted me and my husband with what great crab cakes really taste like, so our conclusion was that Sophie's version would never fool a carnivore – or a pescetarian!





## The Good, The Bad, and The Not So Tasty Best and Worst Meat Analogues

### The Not So Tasty (cont.)



#### Tofurky Pepperoni

Unfortunately, we had to turn two thumbs down on Tofurky Pepperoni.

I love that this product has no nitrates, MSG, GMOs, and is low in calories and fat.

Alas, we just don't like the texture - period. Their taste isn't bad straight out of the package, but my experience with cooking - even a tiny bit - makes the slices tough, chewy, and unappetizing. I can think of better things to put on my homemade pizza!

#### Viana Veggie Bratwurst

Although I love that Viana uses organic, non-GMO ingredients, its Bratwurst simply didn't make the grade - at least with my carnivores!

We tested it side-by-side with Tofurky Beer Brats and Tofurky Kielbasa sausages, and the Tofurky products won hands down.



### Thank You!

That's it for my best and worst meat analogue list. Keep in mind, this is a living document and to keep up with the ever-growing list of new products, be sure to [stay tuned to my blog](#). I post regularly with product updates, reviews, recipes, and helpful information about how to eat healthy meatless meals.

Thank you and remember that eating meatless meals isn't all about vegetables. Serve your carnivores meaty main dishes, minus the meat!

Happy cooking!

Ciao for now,

Nancy