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A Bright & Shining Star

by Emily Feinstein

Recently nominated for a Screen Actor's Guild award for her role on the hit sitcom *The Big Bang Theory*, and launching a vegan cookbook next month, Hollywood celebrity, Mayim Bialik is as dynamic as the universe.

Mayim Bialik began making her way into America's heart at the age of 12 when she played the role of the young Bette Midler in the 1988 movie *Beaches*. After gaining recognition from her performance she landed the lead role in the NBC series *Blossom*. "I never thought I would have my own TV show, which I feel happened accidentally" said Mayim, who claims she started acting as a hobby. Five years later, Bialik left the acting world to attend college at the University of California, Los Angeles. "I always wanted to go to college," she said. "I'm the grandchild of immigrants from Eastern Europe. College was really emphasized in my home no matter what."

Neuroscientist

Bialik fell in love with science when she was 15 and pursued that passion at UCLA. Along the way she worked with a female tutor who mentored her and helped her to build the confidence and the skill set required to pursue a degree in neuroscience. After 12 consecutive years of study, concentrating in neuropsychology and neuropsychiatry, Bialik earned a PhD in 2007. She wrote her thesis on Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder in adolescents with Prader-Willi syndrome and taught neuroscience on and off for five years.

"To me a degree in neuroscience is a fantastic education. My perspective of the universe is broadened" said Bialik. "No

matter if I never used it again, that kind of appreciation and understanding of the scientific world can never be taken away from me." Bialik home-schools her sons ages five and eight and continues to express her love of science. In 2012 she was named as the brand ambassador and spokesperson for Texas Instruments Education Technology. In that capacity she meets with educators and students around the nation to inspire young people to pursue science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) in their studies and future careers.

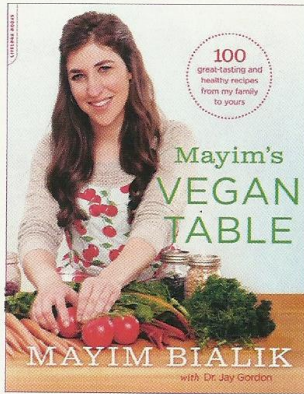
Screen Actors Guild Nomination

A PhD in neuroscience coupled with her acting talent made Bialik the perfect choice to play Amy Farrah Fowler in *The Big Bang Theory*, a role for which she has twice received Emmy nominations and was recently nominated for a Screen Actors Guild Award. On the show, her character's love interest is Sheldon Cooper, played by Emmy and Golden Globe Award-winning actor Jim Parsons (a Houston native.) "Being nominated (for Outstanding Performance by a Female Actor in a Comedy Series) means a tremendous amount. And to be nominated alongside the cast and alongside Jim Parsons is very exciting" said Bialik. The SAG awards ceremony is slated to air January 18 on the TNT and TBS networks.

LEFT: Mayim Bialik arrives at the 2013 Screen Actor's Guild Awards at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles, CA

RIGHT: Mayim Bialik at the 2012 Primetime Emmy Awards Arrivals, Nokia Theater, Los Angeles, CA





ABOVE: Filled with healthy, delicious recipes, *Mayim's Vegan Table* launches in February.

BELOW: Photo by JSquared Photography, Hair & Makeup by Kelsey Deenihan. Styling by Alison Kahn



“One of the things that I tried to do was create a very approachable cookbook,” she said. “I didn’t want to put out a cookbook that’s a bunch of fancy ingredients no one has ever heard of. I really tried to present the fact that I cook for my kids, my friends, and for people who are not vegan, who actually like it and ask for more. I’m not a chef, I’m just a person who enjoys cooking and really wanted to share it.”

From Mommy Blogger to Author

Bialik’s writing career coincided with her reemergence into the acting world. When she was a new mother, she said mommy blogs became “a thing.” Bialik has been writing twice a week for almost two years for Kveller.com, a web site that portrays contemporary, if not humorous, Jewish views on parenting issues. Bialik, who was raised in a kosher household, most closely aligns with Modern Orthodox Judaism.

Known for her intuitive and outside-the-box parenting style, Bialik serves as the celebrity spokesperson for the Holistic Moms Network™. “I started writing about being a mom and my personal adventures in attachment parenting. It was actually my writing there (on Kveller.com) that led to my first book (*Beyond the Sling*, published in 2012), which was about attachment parenting.” Bialik would often write on Kveller.com about the ways that she transformed traditional Jewish recipes into vegan dishes. Her fans responded positively, and that was how the idea to write a cookbook originally emerged.

Mayim’s Vegan Table

Bialik’s new cookbook is called *Mayim’s Vegan Table: More Than 100 Great-Tasting and Healthy Recipes from My Family to Yours*, published by DeCapo Press. It consists of recipes that Bialik has adapted and created which she cooks for her family.

One of Bialik’s friends, who she refers to as “Chef Ali,” helped her to fill in some blanks with vegan recipes. Preceding the recipes are four text chapters that cover vegan cooking choices and include nutritional facts from Jay Gordon MD, a world-reknowned pediatric nutritionist, teacher, lecturer, author and columnist. From dispelling myths about a vegan diet to tackling the food pyramid, the book is a comprehensive guide which outlines fuss-free ways in which parents can set the foundation for eating healthy, delicious foods for a lifetime.

One of Mayim’s favorite recipes in the book is the Baked Ziti – made with pureed tofu and cashew cream, which mimic mozzarella and ricotta cheese. Another favorite is the Shepherd’s Pie, which was originally Chef Ali’s recipe that Mayim modified. Instead of using meat, Mayim combines lentils, vegetables and spices. “I’ve never had Shepherd’s Pie as a non-vegan so I didn’t know what to expect and it’s just one of the things that one of my sons and I absolutely love,” she said.

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Always a lover of animals, she never felt right eating meat. Growing up from the ‘70s and into the ‘90s, the notion of being a vegan was not part of her consciousness. “There weren’t a tremendous amount of options for vegans and it was seen as a very weird, fringe thing” said Bialik. She became a vegetarian at the age of 19 and cut out dairy in college as a suggestion to prevent her chronic sinus infections from flaring up. She hasn’t had a sinus infection since. “About five years ago I read *Eating Animals* by Jonathan Safran Foer,” said Bialik. “That was the last step for me. That helped me go completely vegan.” She believes adhering to a vegan diet is not difficult to maintain and can actually be an easy transition for children, “if it’s presented reasonably and with appropriate alternatives.” For Bialik, choosing to go vegan is one of the many choices she has made in her life that she says, “just fits.” •

To learn more about Mayim Bialik visit www.mayimbialik.net and to pre-order a copy of *Mayim’s Vegan Table* go to www.amazon.com.



Beauty CONFESSIONAL

COVER GIRL, MAYIM BIALIK

SKIN CARE: Bialik likes to use Murad products and although she is not the pampering type, Murad is one of the only places she will go to get a facial. Bialik also likes to use Votre Vu – they have a few select products she buys, including a tonic and some body lotions. “They make this body cream that smells like cake, it’s delicious,” she said.

HAIR CARE: Bialik likes Aveda. Since she eats only vegan, she seeks out products that are also vegan, that don’t test on animals and that tend to be herbal-based. “I’m allergic to anything that is scented heavily so that’s why I like Aveda,” she said.

FITNESS: Bialik took up running about a year ago. “I love running, not on a treadmill, but out in the world,” she said. She also likes weight lifting (machines and free-weights). Sometimes Bialik will use the elliptical machine, especially if she is in the studio. On average, she will try to do something physical three times per week.

PERSONAL STYLE: Bialik likes vintage and retro clothes and says she still wears army boots and dresses on her own time. For public appearances, she leaves the choices to her stylist, Alison Kahn (a Houston native). “I don’t have a personal interest in trends. I don’t understand why some things are trendy and I don’t understand colors” Bialik said. “I’m really grateful that I have a stylist. She gets that I don’t need to be as interested as she is, and wants me to feel good and comfortable in what I wear.” Bialik doesn’t wear sleeveless, strapless or anything above the knee and she admits there’s a bit of a challenge with that, but she likes being a modest dresser. Her preferred designers include Oliver Tolentino – he designed her Emmy’s dress, Tadashi Shoji, Rebecca Miller and Karen Millen.

STRESS MANAGEMENT: Besides running to relieve stress, Bialik also plays piano. She said she plays music often to get out emotions. She is a strong proponent of psychotherapy and religious faith. “I do seek a lot of comfort in stressful times from the formal Jewish learning I do and the understanding of the universe in general, as a place where everything will be OK somehow,” she said. •