

# Vegan YouTube Star Rawvana Went to Bali. A Video by Pauvlogs Helped Bring Her Platform Crashing Down | The Washington Post

By Eli Rosenberg

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The post showed the Instagram and YouTube star on the beach in a red dress, the turquoise waters behind her an unmistakable sign she had landed in a tropical paradise.

“Can you guess where I’m at?” Yovana Mendoza Ayres, 29, a professional social media influencer known as Rawvana, wrote in the caption. “I’ll give you a hint: it’s a plant based paradise.”

Ayres had made a name for herself on YouTube and Instagram by extolling the virtues of a raw and vegan lifestyle, now often referred to as “plant-based.” Her YouTube channels — she has about 2 million subscribers on her [Spanish language channel](#) and another 500,000 in English — are filled with videos of her sharing vegan recipes and skin care routines. On her [personal website](#), she sells meal plans, including a 21-day “Raw Vegan Detox & Yoga Challenge,” to help people lose weight for \$49.

But a couple of weeks after she landed in Bali, she appeared in another YouTube star’s video at a restaurant. The camera found her seated in front of a salad. Her arms dropping to cover the plate did not stop commenters from identifying a distinctly not plant-based item on her plate: fish.

The story of the vegan social media star who was not really a vegan has now traveled across the globe and back. It has been covered by news outlets around the world: from England, to Mexico to Poland and Mexico — the punchline of a joke to some, and to others, yet another example about the way in which the vast and largely unregulated world of social media presents such a ripe environment for scams.

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