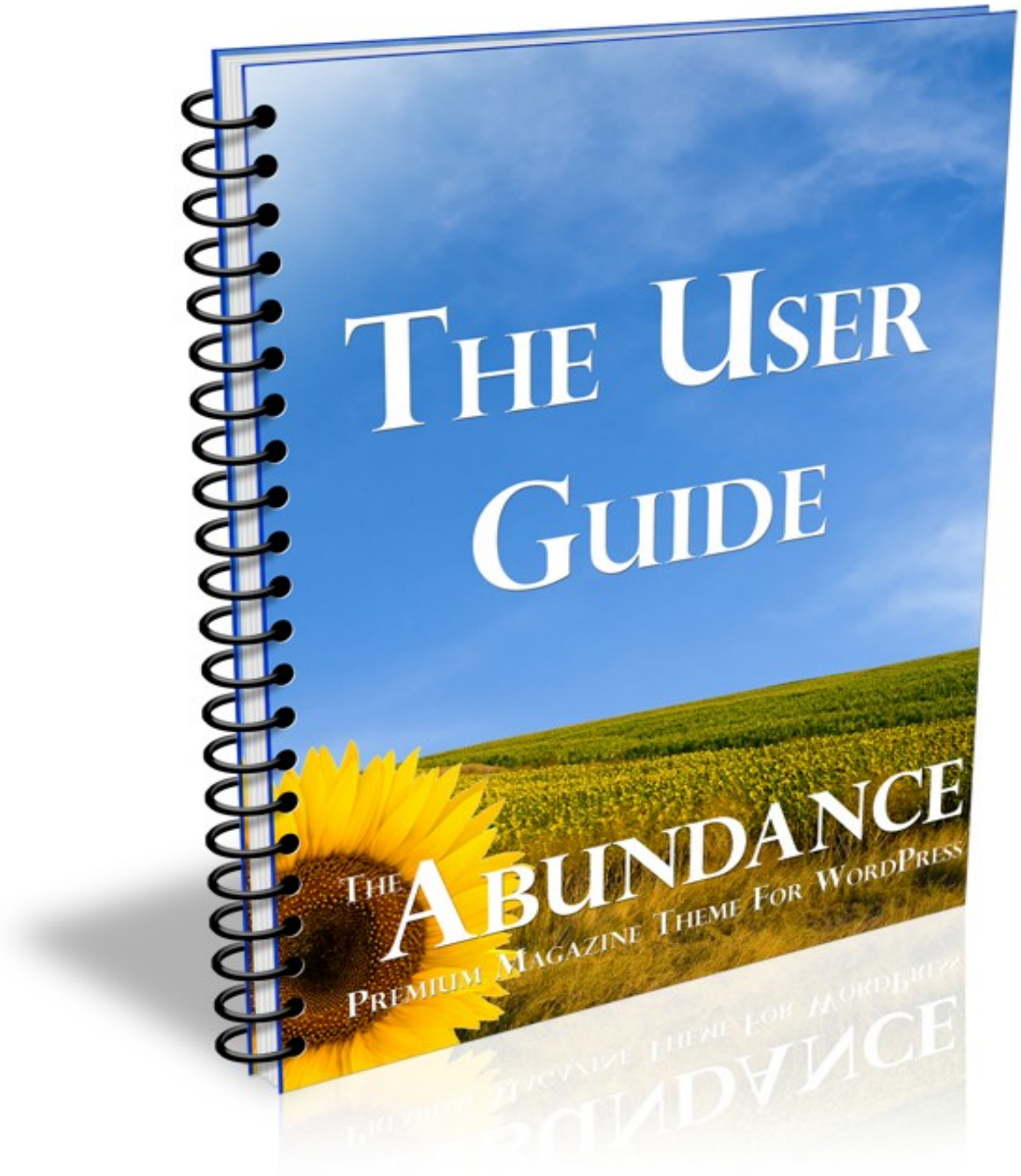

http://www.abundancetheme.com/

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Introduction

I've built literally hundreds of WordPress sites over the years, some for myself, and others to sell on. During that time, I've tried dozens of themes. Some met most of my needs, but all fell short in at least one way.

I don't demand much from a WordPress theme...

It should be properly optimized for search engines, with content towards the top of the source code and navigation code towards the bottom. Most importantly, the post or page title should use the H1 HTML tag and not the blog title. This last one has caused me to reject the majority of themes before even downloading them.

It should be quick and simple to edit and maintain – not just for me when building my own sites but, when building sites to sell, for my clients too. Simplifying life for them simplifies mine as well. No one needs to be answering support queries all day, and if something as simple as a color picker can prevent clients from corrupting style sheets and then hollering for help just as I'm about to take time out with the kids, then I'm all for it.

It should be flexible. Buyers seeking websites often want as many bells and whistles as possible, with appearance being of more importance to some than potential, particularly with newly created turnkey sites that have yet to see traffic or revenue. How the appearance of a site is expected to draw the traffic that hasn't seen it yet is a mystery to me – I'll often start my own sites after doing keyword research by throwing up a bare bones configuration with tagged and categorized articles etc and then experimenting with the effect appearance has once it gets traffic. This allows me to move quickly from building one site to the next, without wasting time with image galleries and fancy headers on the odd site that fails to draw interest. In these instances, I'll need a theme that allows me to add such things but does not require them.

If my sites are offering downloadable items for sale, my ideal theme would use a custom field for the price, so that I can display it in several places but only have to edit it in one. A custom field for the payment button code would be nice too. Again, this makes life easier for clients.

Hmm... maybe I'm just a *little* demanding. If such a theme exists, I couldn't find it and so created my own, adding features that suit my way of working as I've discovered I needed them. The Abundance theme is the result.

Assumptions

Since the aim of this guide is to show how to quickly configure the Abundance Theme, it's assumed that you are already familiar with WordPress and know how to install themes and plugins. If this is not the case, just use Google to find the information you need - it's available in hundreds of places online.

Before You Start.

It makes sense first to assemble any images you want to include.

If you intend to use a header image on your site, it should be 980px wide. The minimum height is 75px, and the maximum height is whatever you choose to make it. Keep in mind that a header too high will force valuable advertising space beneath the fold. I try not to go beyond 110px.

If you're going to include the Featured Content Gallery, you'll also need at least two (and preferably a few more) images measuring 575px wide. Again, the height is your choice – 400px is probably the maximum, but each image should be the same size and should be relevant to the post you plan on linking it to.

Optionally, you can attach thumbnails to your posts. These will show on the front page, as well as in category and search archives and will need to be 150px by 150px. You can use one standard image for all your posts (or for every category), a different one for each, or none at all. Images of any size can be cropped to thumbnail dimensions by the WordPress uploader, although if the images aren't square to begin with the results can be a little unpredictable, so you may prefer to resize and crop your images yourself.

If you're including PayPal buttons on product pages you'll need to have created these buttons and uploaded any digital files and the Thank You pages from which your buyers can download them after payment. Thank You pages needn't be elaborate - a simple HTML file is usually sufficient. I've included a template in *.txt format which you can edit and save as *.html - upload into a folder which you've named as something hard to guess. DownLoadGuard code also works with the theme, and although DLG comes at a price, it's infinitely more secure and convenient than the basic PayPal button method just described.

Finally, you'll need to install your WordPress site. Configure your plugins and settings as usual, and add around ten posts. I like to add at least three tags to each too.

Plugins

You'll also need to upload and install these two plugins...

The Featured Content Gallery

In order for the Featured Content Gallery to work, you're going to need to activate the Featured Content Gallery plugin. For your convenience, this is packaged with the Abundance Theme, but it can also be downloaded from the site below. Incidentally, this is where support for the plugin can be obtained too.

http://www.featuredcontentgallery.com/

Get The Image

Most magazine-style themes draw their homepage and archive images from custom fields added to each post by the user as they're written. This can be a time-consuming process, particularly if you're using a plugin (Amazon Autoposter, for example) to create many posts automatically. It's also a step that a lot of newcomers find confusing, and if you're building websites to sell them you can find that even more of your time is eaten up in answering queries on the procedure.

In contrast, the Abundance theme is coded to use the Get The Image plugin, which simply draws the first image from each post and re-sizes it – a major time saver if you're using something like Amazon Autoposter, because it means that you don't have to open and edit each one. If it can't find an image in the post, the plugin then looks for a custom field (named 'thumbnailimg'), and uses that instead. If it finds nothing, it simply displays nothing.

The version of the plugin included with the Abundance theme has been modified to configure it for the theme, so **do not download any updates from the plugin's site**. If an update becomes available, a download link for the newly modified version will be sent to you via the theme updates

mailing list – be sure to subscribe when you purchase. If you need more information, you'll find it at the plugin's site below.

http://justintadlock.com/archives/2008/05/27/get-the-image-wordpress-plugin

Note that you will still need to install the ***Get The Image*** *plugin even if you don't actually intend to include any images on your site.* The theme first looks for the plugin to let it know if and where images are to be displayed. If it does not find the plugin, the page will not load properly and a php error message will be shown at the point on the page where the error occurred.

Getting Started

Unless you're not starting from scratch, your site should now look much like the one below. Time to upload the Abundance Theme. Once this is done, you should upload your header and other prepared images to the abundance/images folder.

Activate the Abundance theme. The first thing you'll probably notice is that it looks even less inspirational than the default WordPress theme. This is because none of the content areas are activated by default, and there are no default items in any of the sidebars or widgetized areas – from the beginning, the choices are *all* yours.

What follows may seem lengthy, but these are mostly things that are quicker to do than to describe or read about. Configuring the theme is easy, and after you've done it once or twice, you'll find the process can be repeated quite quickly.

The Header Area

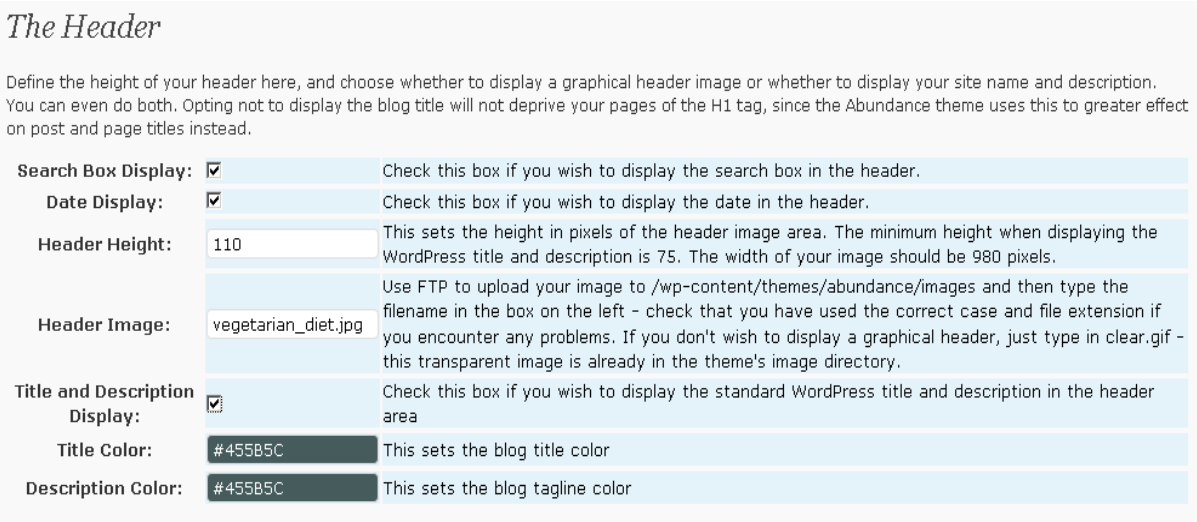
You're faced with your first choice here, with three different options for your header. If you just want to get something up online for testing and will think about appearances when you've the traffic to justify it, you can just opt to show the standard WordPress title and description.

You can also upload a graphic, change the color of the title and description (if necessary), and display them over the top of your graphic. This option is useful if you're selling limited edition websites where everything remains the same except the name.

Here, we're going to go for the third option, in which the title and description display is turned off and the header is entirely graphical. Unlike the majority of WordPress themes, the Abundance theme does not waste the H1 tag on the blog title, and so header text display is not vital.

Click on the 'Appearance' tab in your WordPress admin, and then click on 'Abundance Theme Options'. Scroll down a little to 'The Header'.

First, type the height of your header image into the 'Header Height' box, and then type the filename of the image into the 'Header Image' box. This should have been among the images you uploaded into abundance/images earlier.



Tick the 'Search Box Display' and the 'Date Display' boxes if you'd like to show these. The title and description box is already unticked by default. A little further down the page, tick the 'Navigation Bar Display' box if you'd like to show one, then scroll right down to the bottom of the page and hit the 'Save changes' button. Go back to the front end of your site, refresh the page if it's open in another tab, and you should now see your header. There's obviously still work to be done, though, so let's fill that empty front page a little.

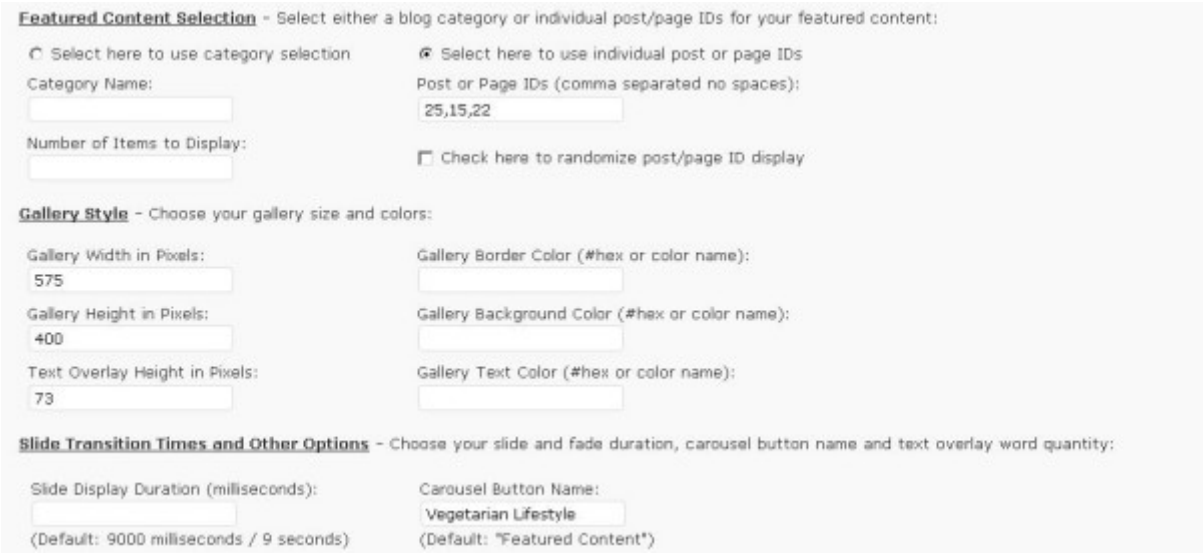
The Featured Content Gallery

The Featured Content Gallery is one of three featured content areas on the page, and it's display – like the other two – is optional. The images shown in rotation by the gallery are each attached to a particular post, and you'll need to use a minimum of two images before the gallery will work. To attach one of these images to a post, click on the 'Posts' tab in your WordPress admin and open the post to edit it. Scroll down until you come to 'Custom Fields'.

In the 'Name' field beneath 'Add new custom field', type 'articleimg' (without the quotes). You won't need to remember this name when you edit subsequent posts – it will appear in a drop-down list. In the 'Value' field, enter your image URL and then hit the 'Add Custom Field' button. Your

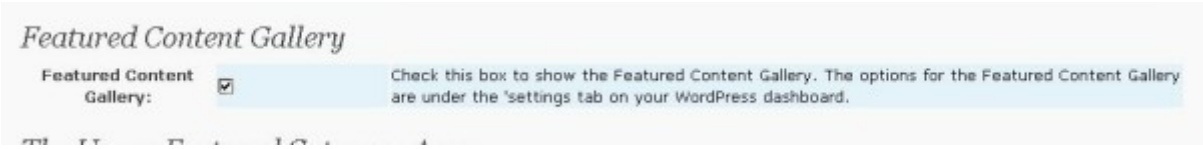
custom field will then appear in a list above the entry fields, briefly glowing a startling yellow as it does so.

As mentioned previously, you'll need to add an image to at least two posts for the Featured Content Gallery to work. Three is usually sufficient, although you can of course add more if you like. Continue to add an image to each of your posts until you feel you've done enough, and then return to the 'Posts' page. Hover over the link to each post that you've edited, and as you do so, you'll see the post ID of each one appear at the end of a link displayed in the status bar of your browser at the bottom left of your screen. Write these numbers down, then click on the 'Settings' tab and the 'Featured Content Gallery' link.

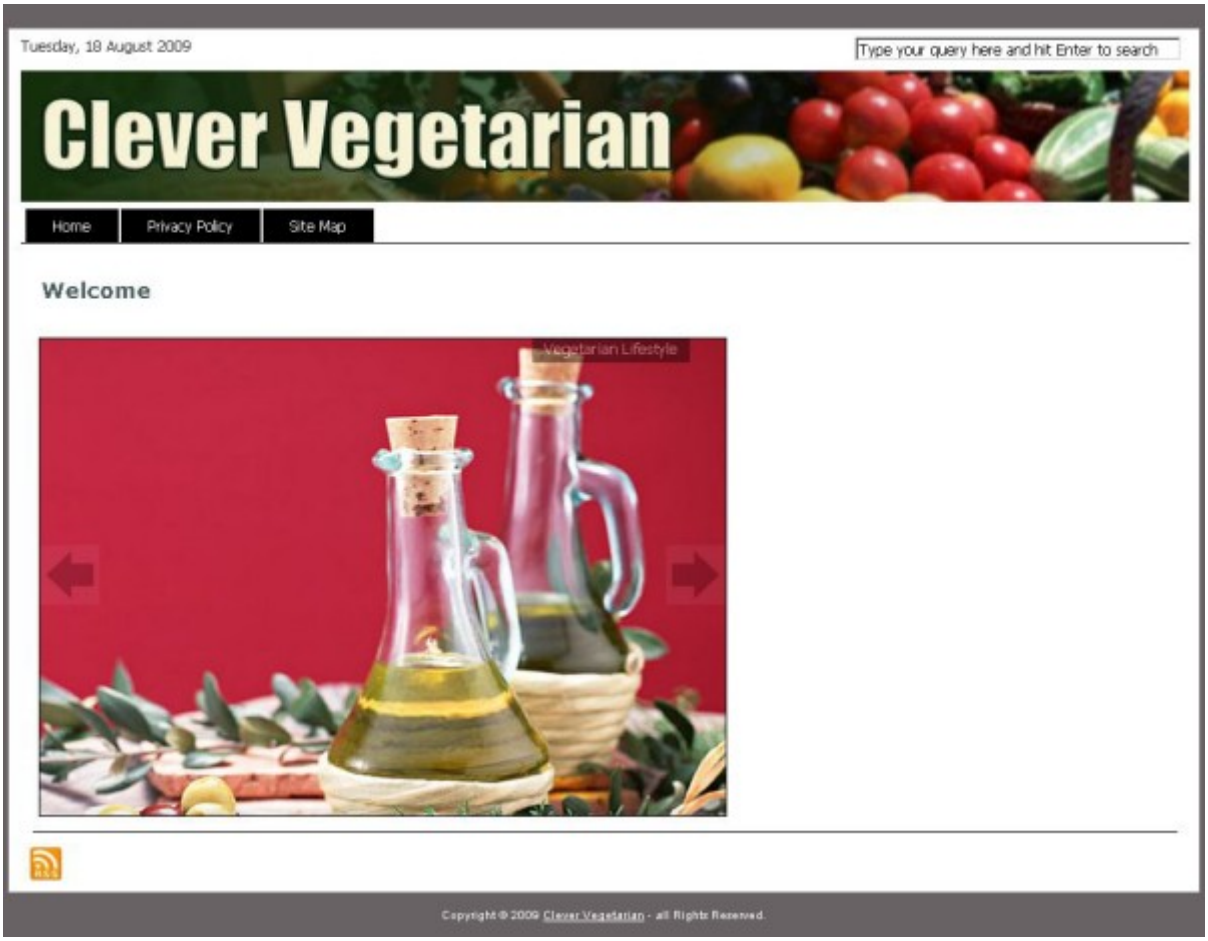


Click the radio button beside 'Select here to use individual post or page IDs', and then type the post numbers that you've just saved into the box beneath it. Alternatively, you could choose to use a category selection, but you will be expected to attach an image to every post in that category or the Featured Content Gallery will not display properly.

In the 'Gallery Style' section, the width and height should be the same as that of your images, and the text overlay height should be 73px. I usually change the name of the Carousel Button too. Editing the other fields is optional, and you can play around with them at your leisure. Hit the 'Update Options' button and then go back to the 'Settings' tab and the 'Abundance Theme Options' link.



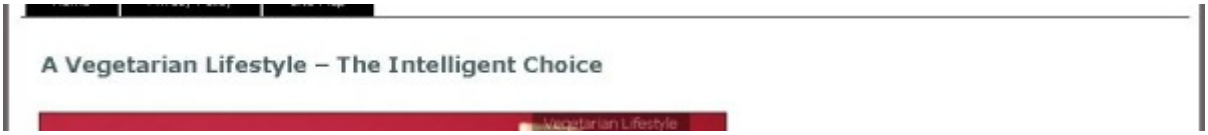
Check the 'Featured Content Gallery' box, and hit the 'Save changes' button. Refresh your front page now and you should see your Featured Content Gallery. If this is the first time you've used one on a site, you'll probably end up staring mesmerized at it for a moment or two before realizing that although things are coming together, there's still more to do. What we need now is to show some actual content.



The Home Page H1 Tag

Back at the Abundance Theme Options page, let's edit our home page H1 tag.

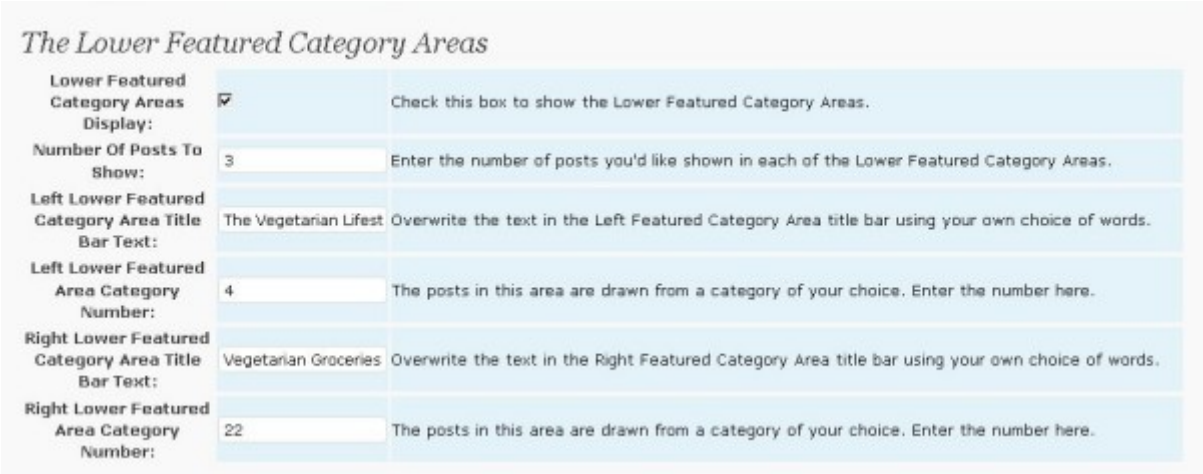
I've done no actual keyword research for this site as yet – it's just something I'm putting together quickly to demonstrate how to configure the theme. You'll need to be a little more thorough, and be sure to incorporate your primary keywords into your H1 tag.



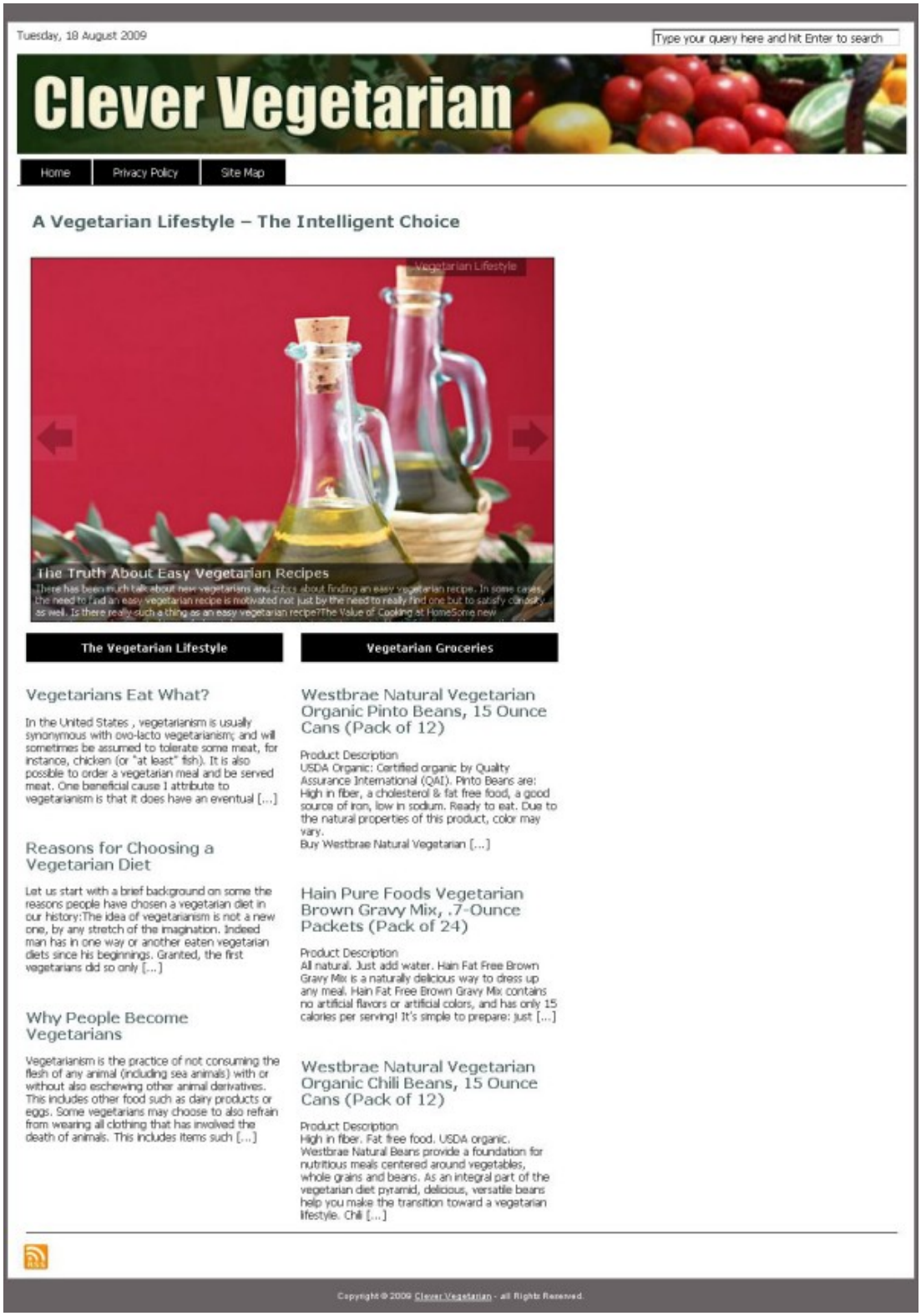
The Featured Content Areas

Beneath the Featured Content Gallery on your front page, you can also choose to show two more featured content areas. The Upper Featured Content Area is a single column that spans the entire content area of the front page and draws posts from a category of your choice, while the Lower Featured Content Area is split into two columns which are again fed from categories of your choosing. Before you can configure these, you'll need to find your category ID numbers in the same way you found the ID numbers for your posts. Go to the 'Posts' tab and the 'Categories' link, and hover over the category links and you'll see the relevant IDs in the browser's status bar.

In this instance, we'll ignore the Upper Featured Category Area until a little later on, and just check the box beside the 'Lower Featured Category Areas Display'. Leave the 'Number Of Posts To Show' at three and enter your category numbers in the relevant boxes. You'll also need to edit the text in the left and right title areas.



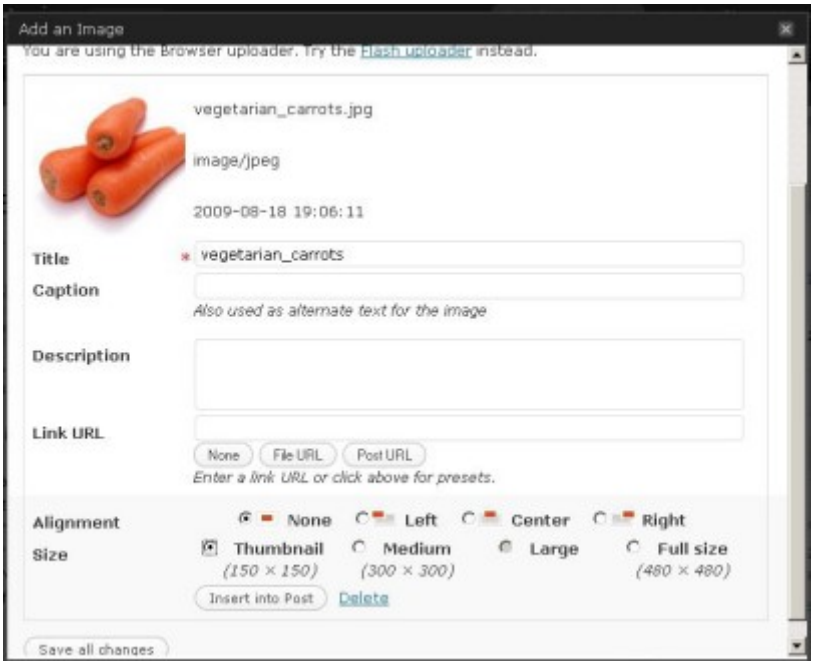
Save changes, refresh your front page, and you should be seeing your content show in two columns beneath the gallery.



That's a bit better. Let's brighten it up a bit more now with some thumbnail images for each post.

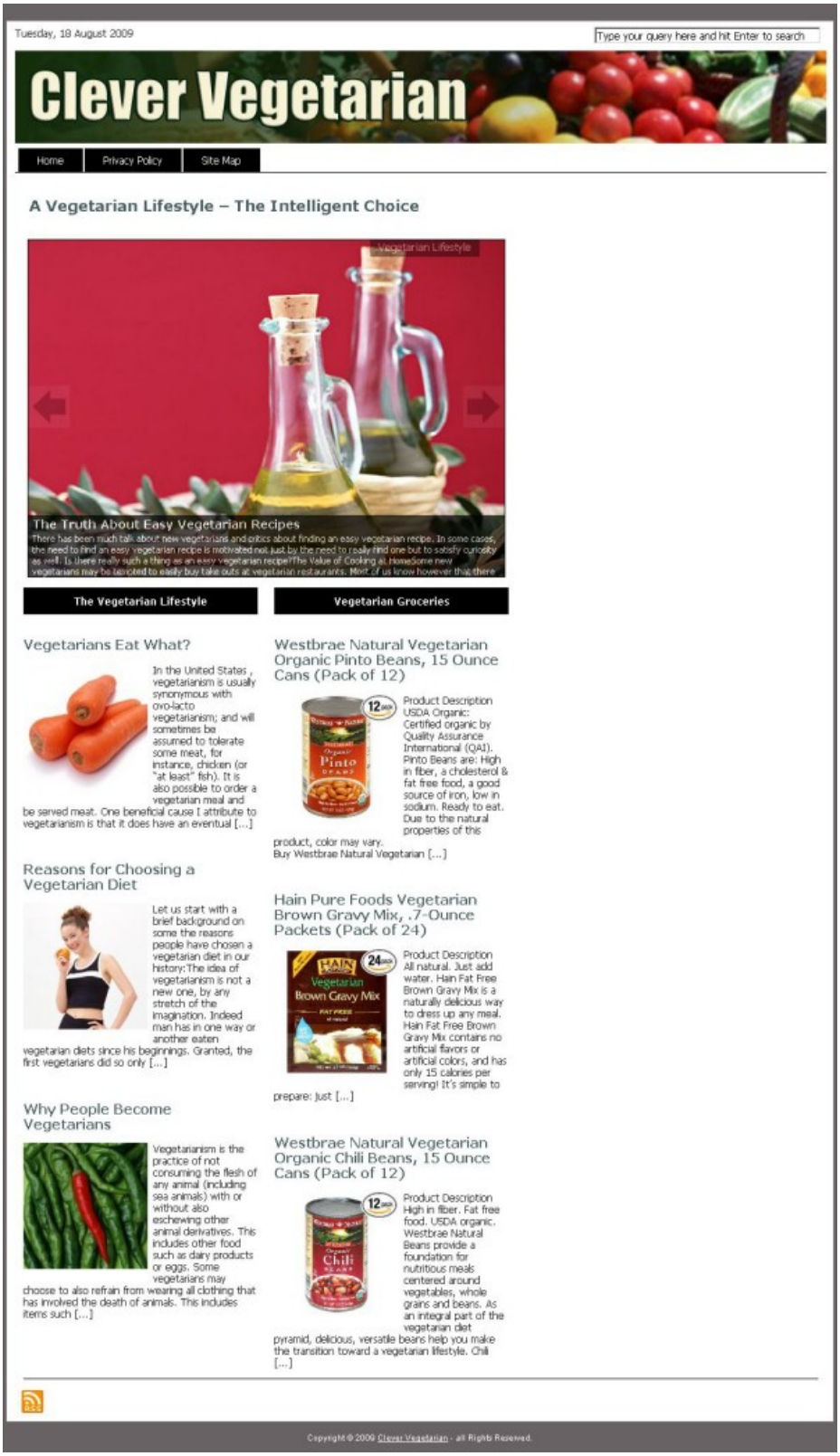
As before, you'll need to edit each post that you want to attach an image to. This time, rather than uploading our images via FTP, we'll use the WordPress uploader. In the 'Edit Posts' screen, click on the icon arrowed in the image below.

You'll then be faced with a pop-up window and told that you're using the Flash uploader, but can switch to the browser uploader instead if preferred. I use the browser uploader as a matter of habit, but the choice is yours. Once you've browsed your hard drive for your image file and successfully uploaded it, you'll be looking at something much like this...



Select your alignment and size choices using the radio buttons, and then click the 'Insert into Post' button. With many other magazine-style themes, you'd now have to create a custom field for each post and paste the image URL into it so that it will display on the front page, but with the Abundance theme, you're done with this bit – the Get The Image plugin takes care of it.

For our demo site, the images on the left were uploaded and inserted into posts via the WordPress uploader as described above, and the images on the right were simply drawn from posts created by an autoposter plugin.



Refresh your front page. It's looking much more appealing now, but some navigation is definitely needed, and a few spots for monetization wouldn't hurt either.

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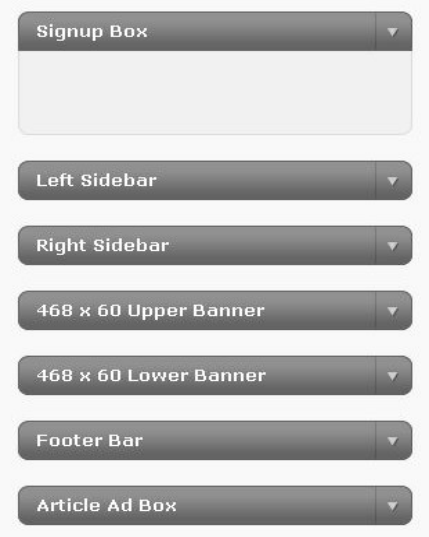
Widgetized Areas

There are seven widgetized areas in The Abundance Theme. All are accessed via the 'Widgets' link under the 'Appearance' tab in the usual way, and what's shown on the front page is shown throughout the site in the same place on every page (unless content on a particular page is displayed using the 'No Sidebar' page template – more about that one later).

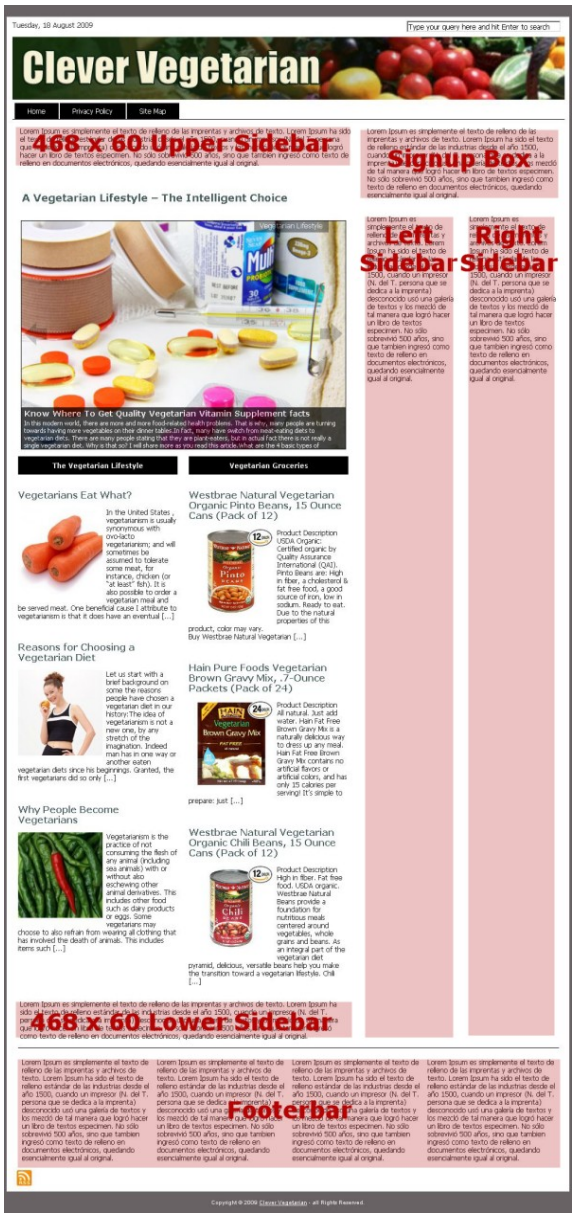


On the following page, I've highlighted the widgetized areas so that you'll know where they appear. The fact that they're all available does not mean that it's necessary or even advisable to use them all at once, although this of course depends on your site's purpose.

The 468 x 60 Upper and Lower Banner areas are so-named because this is where I often put Adsense or Clickbank banners etc of this size, but there's no actual height limit and you can put what you want in them. The lower one also works very well if you put a link-block widget in there. Because it sticks to the bottom of the content whatever the length of the sidebars on the page, those links are the very first thing your reader will see at the end of every article – so much more likely to catch the eye than left in the usual place over on the sidebar.

There's no reason why you can't put anything you like in the Signup Box area, which also has no maximum height. It simply got it's name because it at one time it was where I'd routinely put an e-mail subscribe box. To create a site with a single sidebar, just use the Signup Box – if you don't drop any widgets on to the left and right sidebars, they won't show.

You can fit four widgets alongside each other in the Footerbar. Putting all the navigation in the Footerbar and instead putting a large block of Adsense links and/or other monetization in the sidebar – where most visitors would automatically look to find the navigation – is an experiment that seems to be working well for me. It may seem unlikely that people will scroll all the way down to bottom and find the navigation when you've a lot of content on the front page, but the majority of visitors will land on your site via one of your articles anyway, where pages are generally much shorter. It's not uncommon for a surfer to read several pages and then click away (hopefully through one of your affiliate links) without ever visiting your home page at all. That being said, it's another reason why you might be better off not cramming your front page with every possible feature just because it's available to you.



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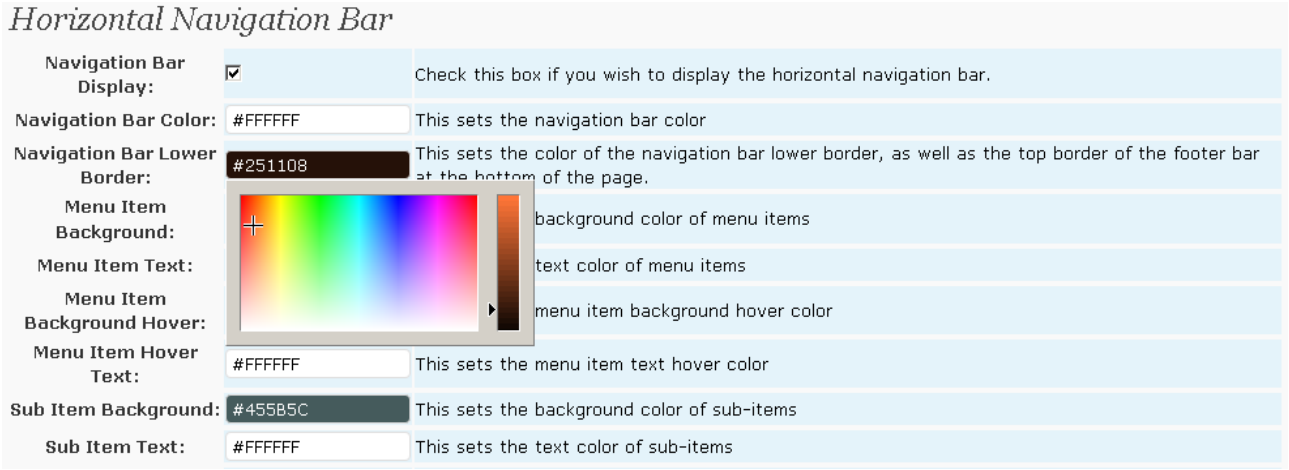
Also available for use is a widgetized ad box area that shows up in the top left of posts if you choose to use it. For a variety of reasons it would be unwise to use this one on sites where there are images inserted at the top of some of the posts, but this does not mean you're excluded from using images with it altogether. If you want to associate an image with the post in order to fill a spot with it on the front page, simply insert the image further down the post or define it's URL in a custom field and not show an image in the post at all.

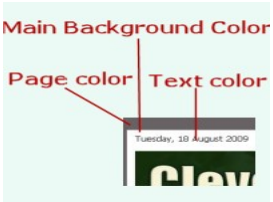
Editing The Site Colors

Before adding Adsense or anything else you might want to blend in with your site, it's a good time to configure your color scheme.



Click on any of the color fields on the theme options page to bring up a color picker. You can either select your color from this, or type or paste the relevant hex code into the color field. Don't forget the # sign. To get rid of the color picker when you're done, click on the field outside it.

It's useful to remember when selecting your colors to choose a contrast between the Page Color (the one that covers the entire screen) and Text Color. This allows the text to be read easily still if slow-loading third party applications prevent the Main Background Color from loading quickly too.



I've now edited my site colors and have added content to the widgetized areas. Having cautioned against stuffing the site with every available feature, this one looks set to be gaudier than Rothchild's Christmas tree, and we're not done yet. Bear in mind that this is for demonstration purposes – less is usually more.

I've put all the navigation in the footer, and the wide Signup Box now boasts two large Adsense blocks. There's an Amazon banner in the upper banner area, and an Adsense link block in the lower one.

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Adding Payment Buttons And Prices

Next, let's add a payment button for a digital product. I'm using DownLoadGuard here so there's no need to create and upload a Thank You page, but if you're just using PayPal, there's a simple Thank You page HTML template included in the folder which contained this guide. Upload your product zip file to your server too and you're ready to go.

Create a normal post using your sales copy. At the bottom of the 'Write' page, it's time to start adding custom fields again. You'll need two, the first being called 'price'. The value field isn't a numerical field – it's just an ordinary text field - and so you can display your price in any currency or even just write FREE.

Call your second field 'paypalbutton', and paste your button code into the 'Value' field.

Once you've added your custom fields and published your post, the result should look like this...

You also have the ability to display a second payment button and price beneath the first. This is useful when you have one product on offer that has two options (e.g. personal use and resell rights). Use 'price2' to display the second price. Use 'paypalbutton2' to display the second payment button.

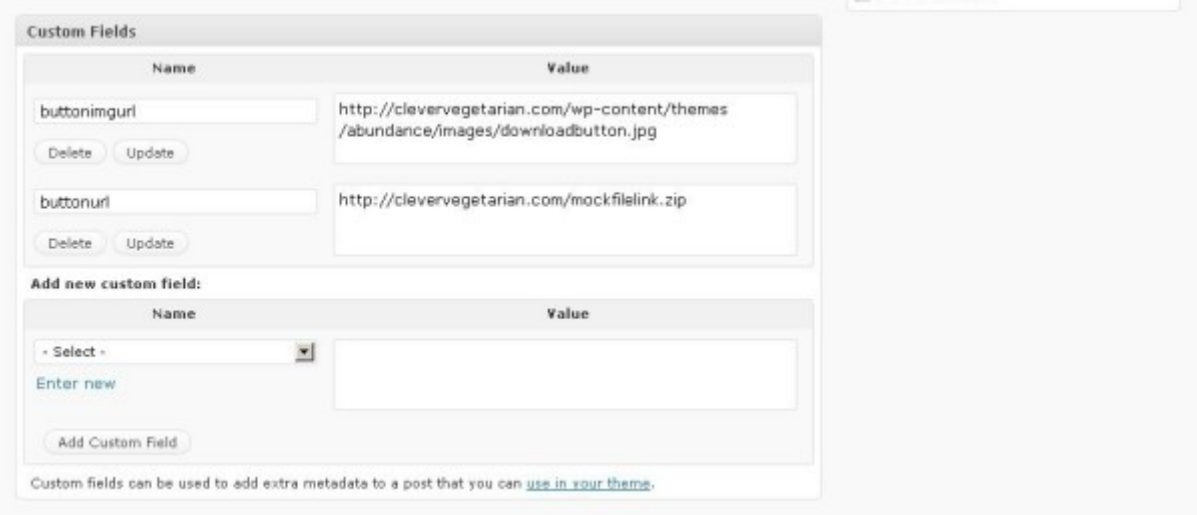
You can also use payment button and price custom fields on pages instead of posts. Used in this way, no prices will be shown on the home page, the archives or anywhere else in the theme.

Alternatively, if you just want to offer a free download (to capture e-mail addresses, for instance), you can use the following method.

This time, your first custom field needs to be called 'buttonimgurl'. Paste into the value field the image URL for your button graphic. You can use one of your own or the one included with the theme files.

abundance/images/downloadbutton.jpg

Call the second custom field 'buttonurl', and paste into the value field the URL you'd like your button to link to, e.g. a squeeze page or perhaps just the zip file if for some reason you're giving a product away without an opt-in.



Add your custom fields, publish your post and the result will be this...

There are many ways you can use the facility to add payment buttons to your posts. In this example, we're just using it on a single post, but there's nothing to stop you from adding it to all of them. Combine with the PayPal Shopping Cart and have an entire site offering digital products if you like. Sell eBooks, web graphics, PLR or even complete web sites.

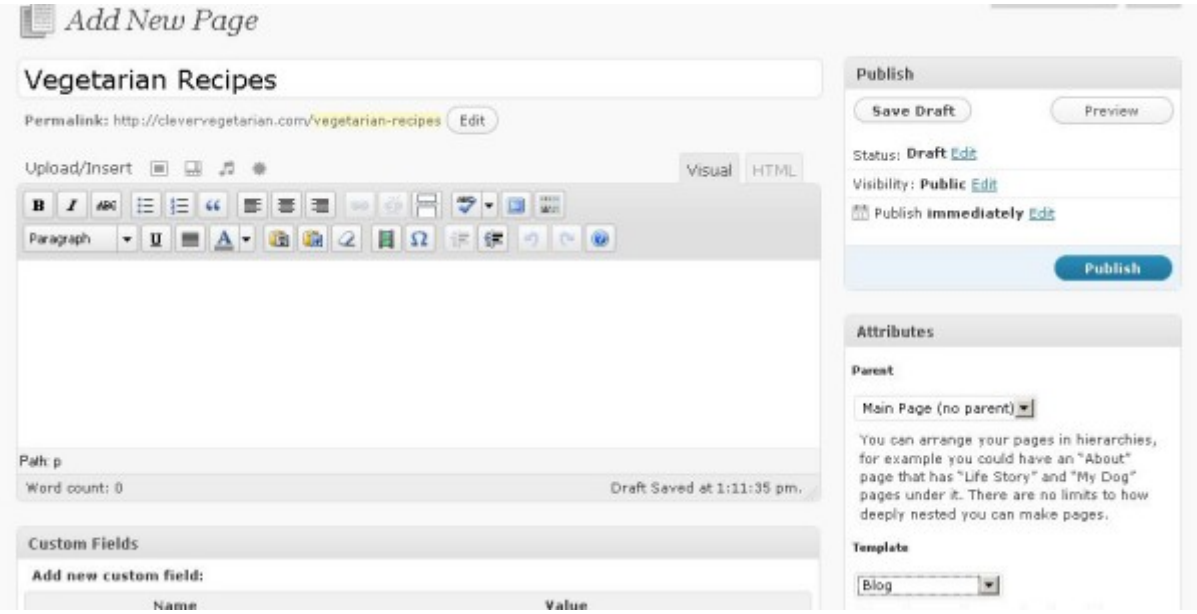
Our product is alone in it's category, so I've opted to display it in the unused Upper Featured Area. You'll notice that because a price has been entered into the post's custom field, it also appears automatically on the home page. Like the image, the price also shows up when the post is listed in category or search archives. Because the Featured Areas can only be seen on the home page, I've also put an image in the sidebar that's linked to the post.

Page Templates

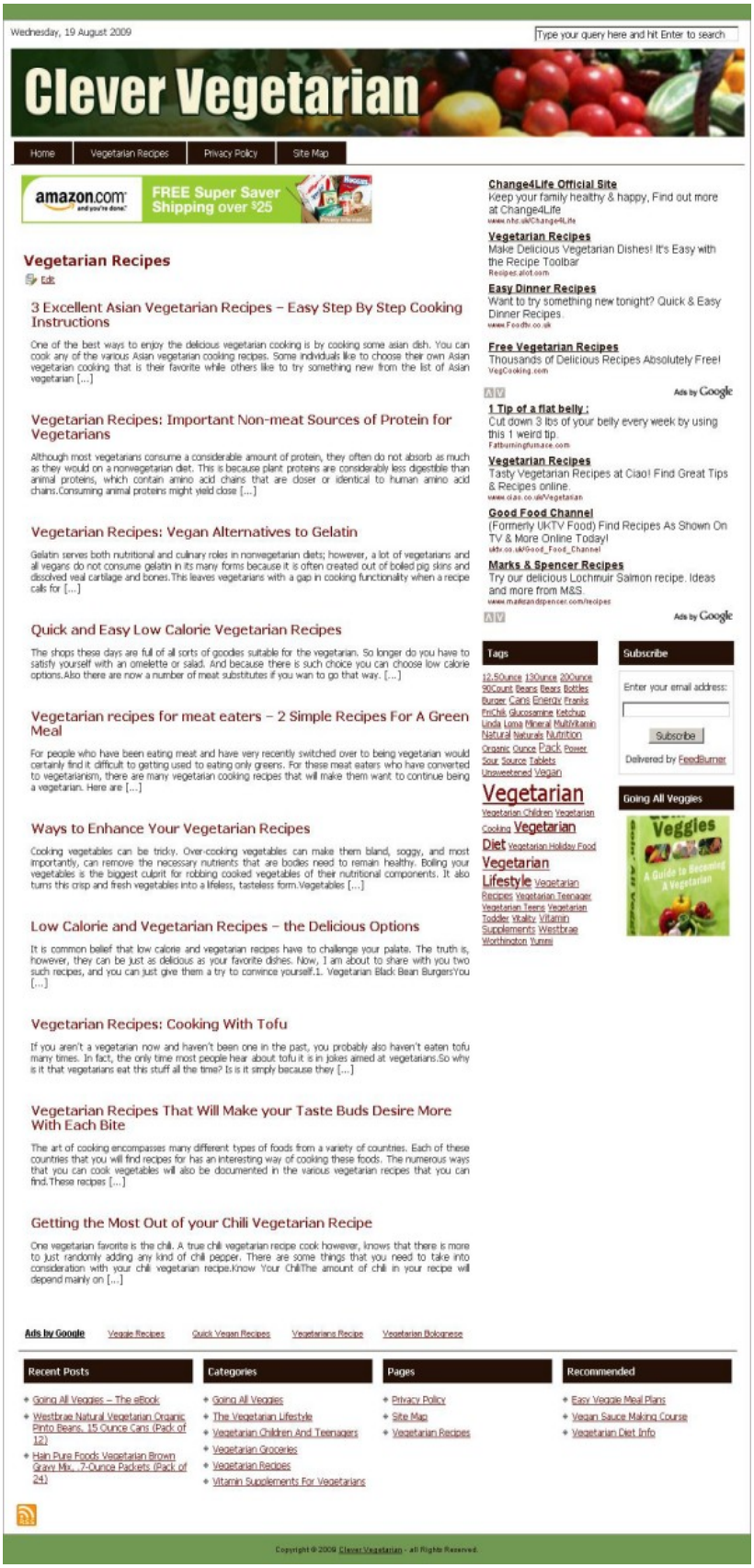
Ordinarily, you'd use the 'Blog' page template to give the appearance of a conventional site with an attached blog. I'm going to use it to give our 'Vegetarian Recipes' category a place of it's own.

After going to the 'Categories' page of your WordPress admin and finding the number of the category that you'd like to use for the blog, head off to the Abundance Theme Options page and enter the number in the box right at the bottom. Save changes.

Now you'll need to go to 'Pages' in your WordPress admin, and select 'Add New'.



Enter your page title – no content here – and from the drop-down 'Template' list in the sidebar, select 'Blog'. Publish and you're done. If I refresh our site's front page now and click on the 'Vegetarian Recipes' tab on the menu bar, I'll see the ten most recent posts in the category.



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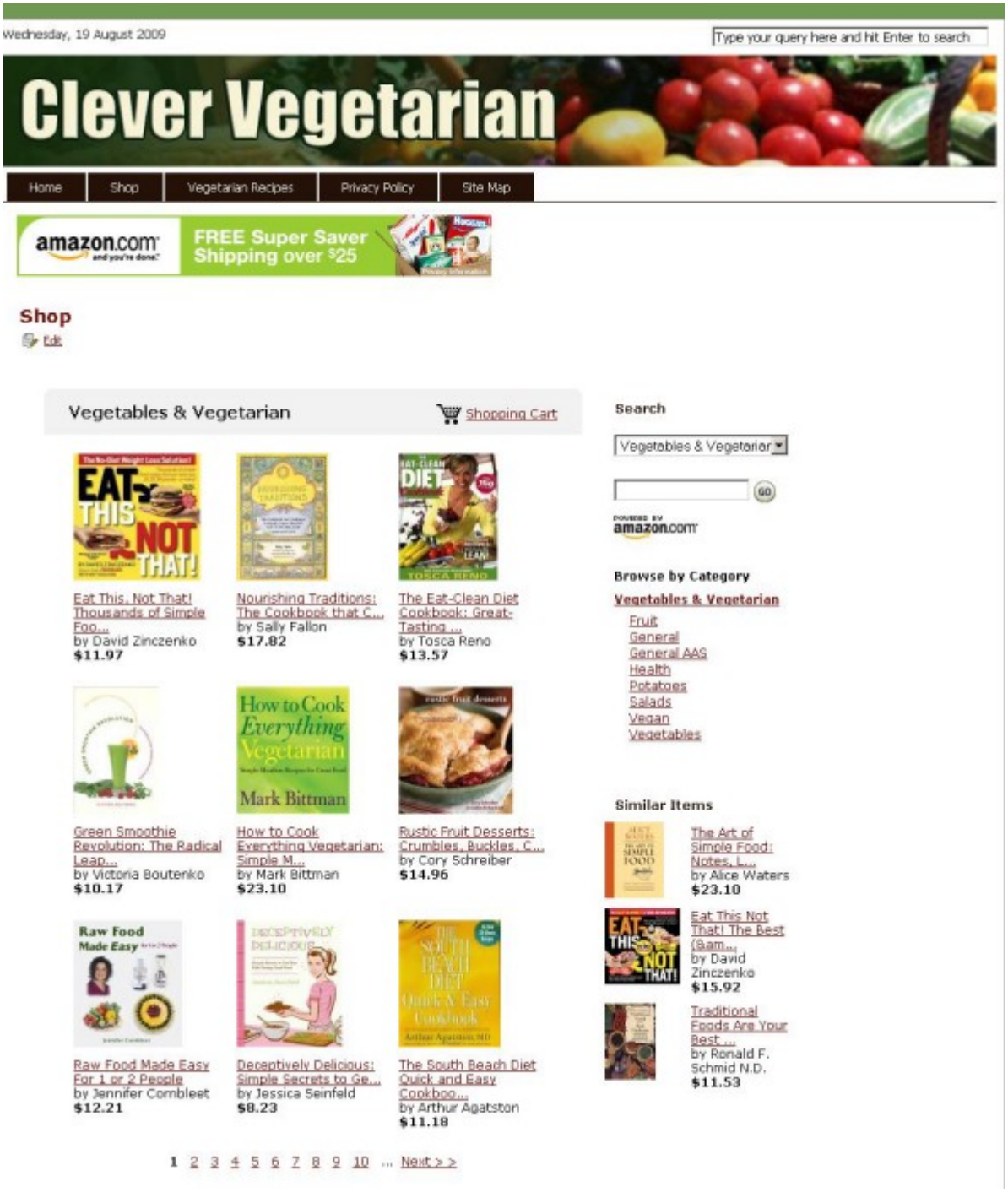
Our site now probably competes with The Great Wall of China for being the only man-made object visible from space, but we're still not quite done – we're going to add an Amazon aStore. Amazon aStores are notoriously wide, and won't fit into most WordPress sites unless you edit the theme files, but with the 'No Sidebars' page template available to us, we don't have to.

Once more in 'Add New Page', enter your page title. You'll need to have paid a visit to your Amazon Associates account and created your aStore (mine took less than five minutes), and copied the 'Embed my store using an inline frame' code. Paste this into the window where you'd normally write your post – for this to work, you MUST be using the 'HTML' tab and not the 'Visual' tab. Select 'No Sidebars' from the drop-down 'Template list, and publish. Refresh your front page, click on the newly created menu tab that links to your store, and you should see something similar to what's shown on the following page.

Due to the inexplicable height of an Amazon aStore, your footer content will be several empty screens in depth below it. I believe you can edit this in the aStore code, but I've never found this is necessary as we can still navigate easily via the horizontal menu.


Wednesday, 19 August 2009
Type your query here and hit Enter to search
Clever Vegetarian
Home
Shop
Vegetarian Recipes
Privacy Policy
Site Map
amazon.com
FREE Super Saver Shipping over $25
Shop
Edit
Vegetables & Vegetarian
Shopping Cart
Eat This, Not That! Thousands of Simple Foo...
by David Zinczenko
$11.97
Nourishing Traditions: The Cookbook that C...
by Sally Fallon
$17.82
The Eat-Clean Diet Cookbook: Great-Tasting ...
by Tosca Reno
$13.57
Green Smoothie Revolution: The Radical Leap...
by Victoria Boutenko
$10.17
How to Cook Everything Vegetarian: Simple M...
by Mark Bittman
$23.10
Rustic Fruit Desserts: Crumbles, Buckles, C...
by Cory Schreiber
$14.96
Raw Food Made Easy For 1 or 2 People
by Jennifer Cornbleet
$12.21
Deceptively Delicious: Simple Secrets to Ge...
by Jessica Seinfeld
$8.23
The South Beach Diet Quick and Easy Cookboo...
by Arthur Agatston
$11.18
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 ... Next > >
Search
Vegetables & Vegetarian
GO
Browse by Category
Vegetables & Vegetarian
Fruit
General
General AAS
Health
Potatoes
Salads
Vegan
Vegetables
Similar Items
The Art of Simple Food: Notes, L...
by Alice Waters
$23.10
Eat This Not That! The Best (Bam...
by David Zinczenko
$15.92
Traditional Foods Are Your Best ...
by Ronald F. Schmid N.D.
$11.53

The Bare Bones Configuration

For those times when you just want to test ideas or keywords without fussing over a site's appearance, a magazine-style theme can be overkill. Fortunately, it's as easy to give the Abundance theme the lightweight look as it is to beef it up later if you decide that the site requires it.

Even if you'll be showing no images on your site, you'll first need to upload and activate the 'Get The Image Plugin'. Then, just upload and activate the Abundance theme, go to the theme options page, edit your front page H1 tag, tick the 'Search Box Display','Date Display','Title And Description Display', 'Navigation Bar Display' and 'Upper Featured Category Area' boxes, and set the number of posts you want to show. There is no category

number defined by default here, and unless you choose to put one there the theme will show all. Throw some navigation and monetization into the widgetized areas and you're done.

Custom Field Quick Reference

For your convenience, here's a quick listing of the custom fields used.

Use ***articleimg*** to show a related image in the Featured Content Gallery.

Use ***thumbnailimg*** if you want to link an image to the post for the home page, but don't want to show it in the post. If you're showing an image in the post, it's not necessary to use a custom field at all here – it will show up on the front page automatically.

Use ***price*** to display the price.

Use ***paypalbutton*** to display your payment button. Despite the name, this needn't necessarily be a PayPal button – DownLoadGuard button code will work here too.

If you have a link to a download or payment page rather than a button code…

…use ***buttonurl*** for a link to the page, together with…

…***buttonimgurl*** for a link to your button image.

Since this user guide was last published, I've added the ability to display a second payment button and price beneath the first. This is useful when you have one product on offer that has two options (e.g. personal use and resell rights).

Use **price2** to display the second price.

Use **paypalbutton2** to display the second payment button.

This addition has meant the need to align the display of prices on the home page to the right instead of the left, and will explain why current demo sites and your own results may look slightly different to some of the images shown in this guide.

Contact

These days, I use the Abundance theme almost exclusively on all my sites, whether they're for keeps or for sale. It meets every requirement I make of a WordPress theme, and I hope it meets yours too. In the event of any problems or if there's something I've forgotten to mention in the user guide, please get in touch at contact@abundancetheme.com