

Cheezy Kale Chips



Kale chips make a great, nutrient-dense snack. Even picky little eaters will gobble them up. You can use just about any dressing to flavor the chips. For super simple kale chips, sprinkle on a little avocado oil (1 Tbsp/15 ml), tamari (1 Tbsp/15 ml) and lemon juice, lime juice or balsamic vinegar (2-3 Tbsp/30-45 ml). Toss with a mixed herb seasoning. The recipe below uses the cashew red pepper “cheese sauce” as a dressing, so if you are making the sauce and have a little left over, there are few better ways to use it up!

About 12 cups (3 l) of kale (or about 2 heads)

1 cup cashew red pepper “cheese”

2 Tbsp (30 ml) fresh squeezed lemon juice, or white balsamic or other vinegar

2-3 tsp (10-15 ml) tamari

1-2 tsp (5-10 ml) herbs or spices

1/4 cup (60 ml) nutritional yeast

1. Wash kale and move stems.
 2. Tear into good sized pieces (not too small) and put into a very large bowl.
 3. Toss with cashew red pepper “cheese” sauce, lemon juice, tamari, herbs and/or spices, if desired.
 4. Dehydrate at about 115 degrees for 4-6 hours. (Can also be done at a higher temperature 130-140 degrees for about half the time. If you do not have a dehydrator, you can bake these chips in your oven at about 250 degrees for 30-40 minutes or until crispy).
-

Seedy Vegetable Crackers



These crackers are absolutely delicious, and nutritious. They bear little resemblance to boxed commercial crackers. I find that many of the healthier crackers on the market are difficult to digest – perhaps long cooking times cause this. These crackers are made from vegetables and seeds with herbs for seasoning – no flour, no oil, no preservatives. I keep them in a tin or in the freezer to retain crispness. *If you do not have a dehydrator, you could try cooking them on the lowest temperature of your oven. I have not tried this, so you would be experimenting. Of course, they would be ready much more quickly. Serve with nut cheese, sliced avocado and tomato, or your favorite spread.*

2 cups (500 ml) sunflower seeds

1 cup (250 ml) pumpkin seeds

6 cups (1.5 L) water

1 cup (500 ml) flaxseeds

2 cups (1 L) water

1/2 cup (125 ml) ground flaxseeds

6 cups (1.5 L) coarsely chopped vegetables (e.g. butternut squash, carrots, zucchini, peppers, onions, tomatoes, etc.)

1/2 cup (125 ml) fresh parsley, basil, dill or other fresh herbs (optional)

2 Tbsp (30 ml) ginger, grated or 2 cloves garlic, minced (optional)

Pinch of red pepper flakes (optional)

2 Tbsp (30 ml) tamari or 1 tsp (5 ml) salt (optional)

1. Soak sunflower seeds and pumpkin seeds in 6 cups (1.5 L) water for at least 2-4 hours.
2. Soak whole and ground flaxseeds in 2 cups (50 ml) water for at least 30 minutes.
3. In a food processor fitted with an s-blade, process vegetables until chopped into very small pieces. Add herbs, ginger or garlic and pulse until thoroughly blended with other vegetables (should be soupy). Place vegetables in a large bowl.
4. Drain sunflower seeds and pumpkin seeds and add to vegetables. They can be chopped in the food processor first if you prefer, although they are great whole. Stir in whole and ground flaxseeds, red pepper flakes, salt or tamari (if using), and stir well.
5. Divide mixture onto 3 nonstick sheets on dehydrator trays. Spread evenly using a metal spatula or flat rubber spatula.
6. Dehydrate for about 8 hours at 110 degrees, then turn scored crackers, and turn crackers over onto a mesh dehydrator tray and dehydrate for another 12 hours or until dry and crispy.
7. Store in an airtight tin in a cool, dry place or in a freezer.

Variations: replace $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of sunflower seeds with chia seeds, sesame seeds or other seeds. Reserve some of the salt for the top of the crackers instead of adding to the batter.

Nutty Cream Cheese



Yield: 2 cups (6 to 8 servings)

*Cheese is the Achilles heel of many plant-based eaters. Commercial plant options looked like cheese, but that is where the similarity ended. The depth of flavor found in dairy-based cheese just couldn't be matched by non-dairy alternatives, until recently. Now fabulous plant-cheeses are making an appearance – many of these based on nuts. The downside is they are not yet widely available, and they are expensive. However, making your own is not nearly as challenging as you might imagine. Miyoko Shinner is a vegan cheese genius, and her book, *Vegan Artisan Cheese* is a masterpiece. This recipe is adapted from this book.*

2 cups (500 ml) broken, raw cashews* , rinsed and soaked for about 8 hour

1/2 cup (125 ml) rejuvelac* or water

1/2 tsp (2 ml) probiotic powder

pinch of salt

Puree the nuts with 1 cup (250 ml) rejuvelac or water, probiotic powder and salt in a high-powered blender. Add a little water to facilitate blending, if necessary. Pour the mixture into a glass bowl and cover. Let sit in a warm area for 12 to 36 hours. My preference is to put on the lowest temperature of the dehydrator and let dehydrate for about

12-18 hours. This makes the cheese firmer and sharper.

If using rejuvelac, there is no need for probiotic powder, although I usually use it anyway to ensure a healthy culture of bacteria.

Variations:

1. Use other nuts such as soaked almonds (skins removed) and macadamia nuts can be used in place of cashews.

2. Herbed cheese – add about a tablespoon (15 ml) of mixed herbs such as chives, dill and parsley and cracked black pepper or a pinch of cayenne to the cheese. Salt to taste.

3. Sundried tomato/basil cheese – add 3 tablespoons (45 ml) of finely chopped sundried tomatoes, 1/4 cup (60 ml) chopped fresh basil, finely chopped and 1-2 cloves garlic. Salt to taste.

4. Olive and oregano cheese – add 1/4 cup chopped olives and about a 1 tablespoon (15 ml) dried Italian herbs (e.g. oregano, basil and rosemary)

5. Use your imagination. Almost anything goes. Make a cheese ball by rolling a the cheese in nuts, dried red and green peppers (as pictured above) or herbs.

Cashew Red Pepper “Cheese” Sauce



This sauce is the perfect substitute for traditional cheese sauce. It is fabulous on broccoli or cauliflower, potatoes, pizza, lasagna, scrambled tofu, sandwiches, tacos, nachos or anything else you love cheese sauce with. I originally acquired the recipe from my dear friend, Margie Colclough and made just a few small adjustments.

Ingredients:

2 cups (500 ml) water
1 cup (250 ml) raw cashews, soaked for about 2 hours*
1 red pepper, raw or roasted, coarsely chopped
3 Tbsp (45 ml) corn starch (or other starch)
3 Tbsp (45 ml) nutritional yeast (Red Star Vegetarian Support Formula)
2 Tbsp (30 ml) lemon juice or apple cider vinegar
1 tsp (5 ml) salt

Preparation:

1. Combine all ingredients in a blender and process on high speed until very smooth and creamy.
2. Pour into a medium-sized saucepan and cook until thickened.
3. Return to blender and process again on high speed (this step is not absolutely necessary but does produce a much creamier sauce). Serve hot or store in the refrigerator for later use. Great hot or cold.

Variations:

1. Add fresh garlic (1 clove, minced) or garlic powder (1/4 tsp/1 ml) , onion powder (1/2 tsp/2 ml) or herbs as desired (jalapeno peppers, dill, basil, oregano, parsley, etc.)
2. Add 1/2 tsp (2 ml) turmeric and fresh ground black pepper.