

Cashew Pear Cream



Cashew -Pear Cream (cream or whipping cream substitute)

This is the healthiest, most delicious replacement available for whipping cream. Use in a breakfast bowl, on fruit salad, on pumpkin pie, apple crisp, baked or grilled fruit or other desserts.

1 x 15 oz can or jar of pears in water or juice or about 2 cups home canned pears with juice

1 1/2 cups raw cashews (soaked for 2-4 hours* and drained)

1/2 tsp vanilla

Directions

1. Blend ingredients at high speed until very smooth.
2. Pour into a jar and refrigerate. For a thinner cream sauce, use 1-1 1/4 cup cashews, for a thick whipping cream consistency, use 1 3/4-2 cups cashews.

Notes:

Use home canned pears if available.

To make a raw pear cashew cream, use ripe fresh pears (2-3 large pears) and 1/4 cup water or coconut water with 1 1/2-2 cups cashews.

*Soaked cashews blend more easily, but raw cashews (well rinsed) can be used.

Plain Cashew Cream (no pears)

1 cup raw cashews (soaked for 2-4 hours* and drained or just rinsed)

1/4-1/2 cup water or coconut water (depending on thickness desired)

2-3 medjool dates (other other dates – double amount if using small dates)

1/2 tsp vanilla

Directions

1. Blend ingredients at high speed until very smooth.
 2. Pour into a jar and refrigerate.
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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.

Suberb Smoothies



I am not a smoothie person. Not because I don't think they have value, or because I don't like the taste. I just enjoy eating and chewing so much, I prefer a solid food to a smoothie. However, I do think smoothies can be convenient, nutritious and very quick and easy, so it is a reasonable choice for many people. In addition, blending breaks down plant cell walls making many of the valuable nutrients even more digestible.

I am not terribly impressed with commercial smoothies as they tend to be very sweet. Sometimes they have fruit juice or fruit juice concentrates added, so READ the label or ask the restaurant or smoothie bar to skip these ingredients or any other concentrated sweeteners. I am also less than enthusiastic about smoothies that are meant to replace a meal but contain only fruits, vegetables and water. These smoothies lack the protein, essential fatty acids and trace minerals that you need from a meal. Adding seeds, nuts, seed

or nut butters, tofu or non-dairy yogurt can help to boost nutritional value and provide some fat to help maximize the absorption of fat-soluble nutrients.

Basic Berry Breakfast Smoothie

1.5 cups (375 ml) non-dairy milk (use 1 cup non-dairy milk and 1/2 cup non-dairy yogurt if desired)

1 cup (250 ml) fresh or frozen berries

1 frozen banana, chopped

1/4 cup (60 ml) hempseeds

1-2 Brazil nuts

Variations

1. Replace berries with 1 cup fresh or frozen mango and/or pineapple

2. Replace the berries with 1 cup fresh or frozen nectarines or peaches

3. Decrease the hempseeds to 2 Tbsp (30 ml) and add 1 1/2 Tbsp (22.5 ml) almond butter, tahini or other nut or seed butter

4. Replace hempseeds with 2 Tbsp (30 ml) chia seeds or ground flaxseeds and 2 Tbsp (30 ml) sunflower seeds (best to soak them first)

Boosters

There are several “boosters” you can add to make your smoothie even more nutritious.

1. GREENS – add 2 cups baby kale, spinach or your favorite greens OR 2 Tbsp powdered greens.

2. PROBIOTICS – add the contents of one probiotic cap or 1/4 tsp (1 ml) probiotic powder.

3. AVOCADO – add 1/4-1/2 an avocado.

4. WHEAT GERM – add 1 Tbsp wheat germ

Smoothie Smarts

Here are some simple tips to help you avert smoothie disasters.

1. If you add flaxseed, drink your smoothie right away so it doesn't get gummy.
 2. Freeze your banana before adding. Smoothies are just better cold.
 3. Make sure your fruit is ripe before adding or freezing it for smoothies. This is especially important for bananas.
 4. Do not add sugar, syrup or dried fruits to your smoothie. You get enough sugar from the fresh fruit.
 5. Don't bother adding ice – it just dilutes the fabulous flavors. If you want your smoothie colder, just freeze all the fruit!
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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.