

Basil Garlic Cashew Cheese

Gluten Free, Dairy Free, Vegan, Paleo, Raw

This is a fresh dip for crudité and can be used as a topping on all your Italian dishes. Add a dollop to zucchini noodles with tomato sauce to get a creamy, cheesy taste without any dairy. Add it to warm fluffy quinoa.

Pairs nicely with chardonnay, sauvignon blanc or a dry rose

Makes 1 cup

1 cup raw cashews, soaked in water for 4 hours or overnight in the refrigerator
1 clove garlic, peeled and coarsely chopped (2 cloves for a more garlicky flavor)
2 Tb fresh lemon juice
1 Tb apple cider vinegar
¼ cup filtered water
¼ cup nutritional yeast
1 Tb Dijon mustard
2 Tb chopped parsley
½ tsp Celtic sea salt, or more to taste
½ cup fresh basil leaves, lightly packed, coarsely chopped

- Drain and rinse the soaked cashews.
- Add all the ingredients, except the basil to a high speed blender.
- Blend on low speed to start. Keep scraping down the sides until it is running smoothly. Add more water a little bit at a time if necessary, but not too much. Turn up the speed and blend until creamy.
- Add the basil leaves and blend until the basil is broken up but you still have a few tiny specks.
- Taste to adjust salt.
- It will be the consistency of thin yogurt but will firm up to the consistency of sour cream once chilled.
- Chill for 1 hour. Store in the refrigerator for up to 5 days.

Olive Cashew Cheese

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The rich salty taste of the olives pairs nicely with the sweet cashews. Start without any salt. Add salt at the end. The amount will depend on the saltiness of the olives. I like to use a combination of Kalamata, oil cured and green olives.

Pairs nicely with Merlot or Pinot Noir

1 cup raw cashews, soaked in water for 4 hours or overnight in the refrigerator
1 clove garlic, peeled and coarsely chopped (2 cloves for a more garlicky flavor)
2 Tb fresh lemon juice
2 Tb apple cider vinegar
¼ cup filtered water
¼ cup nutritional yeast
1 Tb Dijon mustard
1/3 cup mixed olives, chopped
Salt and pepper to taste

- Drain and rinse the soaked cashews.
- Add all the ingredients, except the olives to a high speed blender.
- Blend on low speed to start. Keep scraping down the sides until it is running smoothly. Add more water a little bit at a time if necessary, but not too much. Turn up the speed and blend until creamy.
- Add the olives and blend, leaving a few tiny pieces of olives.
- Add salt and pepper to taste
- It will be the consistency of thin yogurt but will firm up to the consistency of sour cream once chilled.
- Chill for 1 hour. Store in the refrigerator for up to 5 days.

Porcini Mushroom Cashew Cheese

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The rich earthy flavor of the mushrooms goes very well with red wine. I serve it with an American Cabernet or French Cote de Rhone. It makes a nice topping for roast potatoes.

1 cup raw cashews, soaked in water for 4 hours or overnight in the refrigerator
¼ cup dried porcini mushrooms,
½ cup filtered water
1 clove garlic, peeled and coarsely chopped (2 cloves for a more garlicky flavor)
1 Tb fresh lemon juice
1 Tb apple cider vinegar
¼ cup nutritional yeast
1 Tb Dijon mustard
2 Tb chopped parsley
½-¾ tsp salt

- Put the porcini mushrooms into a small bowl.
- Boil the water and pour over the mushrooms. Let sit for 30 minutes until soft.
- Drain and rinse the soaked cashews.
- Pour the mushrooms into a strainer saving the liquid. Rinse the mushrooms to remove any sand.
- Let the mushroom liquid sit for a few minutes. Pour off ¼ cup of the mushroom water leaving the sand at the bottom. If there is a lot of sand, you can pour it through a coffee filter, but I don't usually find it necessary.
- Add all the ingredients to a high speed blender.
- Blend on low speed to start. Keep scraping down the sides until it is running smoothly. Add more water a little bit at a time if necessary, but not too much. Turn up the speed and blend until creamy.
- Chill for 1 hour. Store in the refrigerator for up to 5 days.

Horseradish and Dill Cashew Cheese

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The bold flavor of horseradish and sweet taste of dill blend nicely with the cashews. I love it as a topping for salmon.

It pairs well with Pinot Noir or Chardonnay, which will stand up to the bold horseradish.

1 cup raw cashews, soaked in water for 4 hours or overnight in the refrigerator
1 clove garlic, peeled and coarsely chopped (2 cloves for a more garlicky flavor)
2 Tb fresh lemon juice
1 Tb apple cider vinegar
¼ cup filtered water
¼ cup nutritional yeast
1 Tb Dijon mustard
2 Tb prepared horseradish
4 Tb chopped dill
½ tsp Celtic sea salt, or more to taste

- Drain and rinse the soaked cashews.
- Add all the ingredients, except the dill to a high speed blender.
- Blend on low speed to start. Keep scraping down the sides until it is running smoothly. Add more water a little bit at a time if necessary, but not too much. Turn up the speed and blend until creamy.
- Add the dill leaves and blend until the dill is broken up but you still have a few tiny specks.
- Taste to adjust salt.
- It will be the consistency of thin yogurt but will firm up to the consistency of sour cream once chilled.
- Chill for 1 hour. Store in the refrigerator for up to 5 days.