

Sauces and Spreads

Basil Pesto

2 c fresh basil leaves
2 cloves garlic cloves
1/4 c pine nuts
2/3 c extra-virgin olive oil
salt to taste
pepper to taste
1/2 c Pecorino or Parmesan cheese - freshly grated

Combine fresh basil, garlic, and pine nuts in a food processor. Pulse until coarsely chopped.

Add 1/2 of the olive oil and process until smooth (fully incorporated).

Season with salt and pepper.

If using immediately, add remaining olive oil and pulse until smooth. Transfer basil pesto to a serving bowl. Mix in the cheese.

If freezing, transfer to air-tight container and drizzle remaining oil over the top. Good for up to 3 months. Thaw and stir in cheese.

Almond Spread

3/4 cup raw almonds (or sunflower seeds or a combination of the 2)
3/4 cup water
1 cup olive oil
1 large clove of garlic (or 1 tsp garlic powder)
Juice of 1/2 lemon (about 1/4 cup)
1 tsp salt
1/4 tsp cayenne pepper (or less - I just use a dash)

Place everything in a blender and blend until smooth. If you need more moisture, you can add a little more water or a little more olive oil so it will blend.

This is great on vegetables, baked potatoes, spread for a sandwich.

Refrigerate left overs. Will last in refrigerator for about 1 week.

The Best Vegan 'Cheese' Sauce

Ingredients

1/2 c raw cashews, soaked
1 1/2 c peeled and diced potato, any variety will work
1/2 c peeled and chopped carrot
3 T nutritional yeast, I like Bob's Red Mill
1 tsp garlic powder
1/2 tsp onion powder
1/2 tsp fine sea salt, plus more to taste
1-2 T white vinegar
1-2 T lemon juice
water to thin

Instructions

*You can either soak the cashews overnight in a bowl covered by a few inches of water or do the quick soak method. To quick soak, bring a small pot of water to a boil then remove from the heat and add the cashews. Allow to soak for 30 minutes then strain and rinse before using in the recipe.

Bring a small pot of water to a boil then add the diced potatoes and carrots. Boil for about 10 minutes, until the vegetables are fork tender. Strain the excess water and allow to cool.

Add the cooked vegetables, soaked cashews, nutritional yeast, garlic powder, onion powder, vinegar, lemon juice, salt and 3 tablespoons of water to the blender. Blend on high, scraping down the sides as needed or adding more water to help blend. I recommend adding just 1-2 tablespoons of water in between blending until the desired consistency is reached. It should be pourable but still thick and creamy. Taste test to see if you prefer more sour (vinegar/lemon juice) or more salt. Add more as desired and blend until smooth.

Serve cheese sauce warm or refrigerate in a sealed container for up to 1 week. Reheat in the microwave or on the stovetop when ready to serve. You may need to add a splash of water when reheating. Just be careful not to water it down.

Thai Peanut Sauce

1/2 c unsweetened peanut butter - creamy or crunchy
1/2 c water (can use up to 3/4 c if you like your sauce thinner)
1-2 T agave nectar (can use honey or maple syrup)
2 T low sodium soy sauce or 1 T regular soy sauce
1 T apple cider vinegar or 2 T unseasoned rice vinegar
1/2 lime - juiced
1" fresh ginger - grated
1-2 cloves garlic (or 1/4 tsp dried)
1/4 tsp sesame oil (optional)
2 tsp fresh cilantro

Mix all ingredients in a blender or food processor. Blend until smooth.

Store in jar with tight sealing lid. Can be refrigerated for a couple of days.

Creamy Cilantro Sauce Ingredients

Instructions

Mix all ingredients in bowl Taste and add salt to taste

1 lb ripe tomatoes - diced
1/2 cup red onion - minced
1/4 cup cilantro - finely chopped
1 jalapeno pepper - remove ribs and seeds and finely chop
15 - oz can black beans (drained and rinsed) or 1 1/2 cup cooked beans
1 lime (2 Tablespoons) juice
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt - plus more to taste

Instructions

- Place cashews in bowl and cover them with water. Soak for 1 hour or over night (even better)
- Juice the limes
- Drain cashews.
- 1 cup raw or roasted cashews
- 1/2 cup water
- 1/4 cup lime juice (juice from 2 limes)
- 2 large handfuls cilantro leaves and tender stems 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- Add cashews, water, lime juice, cilantro and salt to a blender or food processor and blend on high for 1 minute.
- Stop and scrape then add additional liquid if necessary to get a creamy consistency.
- Blend several minutes
- Store in sealed container refrigerator for 1 week or in freezer for several months.

