

The Best Vegan Mac 'n Cheese!

Prep Time: 15-20 minutes

Cook Time: 30 minutes

Yield: 4 full servings or 8 side-dish servings

Ingredients

In the skillet:

- 1 cup sweet potatoes, chopped (*russet potatoes are yummy, too!*)
- 1/3 cup onion, chopped
- 1/4 carrots, chopped
- 2 tsp coconut oil or grape seed oil

For the cashew cream:

- 1 cup raw cashews (***soaked***** for 8 hours prior to use *OR* milled)
- 1/2 cup + 2 tbs coconut oil (*olive oil or grape seed oil work well, too!*)
- 2/3 cup unsweetened coconut milk
- 1/4 cup + 1 tbs nutritional yeast
- 2 tsp sea salt
- 1/4 tsp smoked paprika

Other ingredients:

- 1 pound of your favorite noodles (*I use gluten-free quinoa pasta from Ancient Harvest*)
- 1 head of broccoli, de-stemmed and chopped

****** *If you soak your cashews, use 3/4 cup of raw cashews instead of 1 cup, as the cashews will expand.*

Step 1: Cook the skillet ingredients.

Cut up the potatoes, carrots, and onion. Don't peel your potatoes; keep those nutrients in! Place these items in skillet with the 2 tablespoons of oil. Initially, place the items on medium heat. Once the contents start crackling, turn the heat down to low, cover, and cook for 15 minutes.

Step 2: Boil the macaroni noodles.

Don't worry about cooking them al dente. I have found that the al dente noodles tend to get a little crunchy in the oven, so I always cook my noodles until they are squishy, but not mushy. Nobody likes mushy.

Once you strain the noodles, rinse them off with cold water. This prevents the noodles from cooking themselves longer from the heat they retain during boiling.

Step 3: Prepare the cashew cream.

I have a NutriBullet, which has a milling blade that grinds cashews to a flour **without the need for soaking**. If you place the raw cashews in a strong food processor, blender, or coffee grinder, it will probably work. The result you're looking for is the cashew pulp, seen below. For the non-soakers, blend your cashews first before adding the rest of the ingredients.

For most of you, you will need to soak your cashews for 8 hours prior to making this meal. Once the soaking is over, drain your cashews. Make sure you have a strong blender or food processor to avoid chunks of wet cashews (ew). For the soakers, you'll probably need blend the cashews and coconut milk first before adding the rest of the ingredients.

Once you have blended the cashews, add the rest of the cashew cream ingredients. It will look something like this:

Step 4: Blend the skillet and cashew cream ingredients in a food processor.

Your skillet time should be up. Dump both the skillet ingredients and cashew cream ingredients in a food processor and blend until smooth and creamy.

Step 5: Mix the noodles, cheese, and broccoli together. Cook.

I cook for only two, so this recipe is excessive for us. We are huge leftover fans, so I put half of the noodles in one baking dish and half in another. I do the same with the cheese and broccoli. One dish will be cooked now; the other will be placed in the fridge and will be cooked tomorrow.

If you live in a house of 4 or more, you're probably intent on cooking all of it at once, and that is a splendid idea! Oil your favorite baking dish(es) first. Place your noodles in the baking dish. Dump the cheese on top, sprinkle your broccoli pieces, and stir it all up.

Place your dish(es) in the oven at 350° for 30 minutes.