

# Cashew Cream or Cheese



Dixie D. Vereen for The Washington Post, Sep 6, 2016

If you've ever wanted a creamy sauce but didn't have dairy products on hand, then this is the next best thing. Made with raw cashews and water, this sauce has a nutty creaminess that is also extremely versatile. Thin it down further with water to create a savory base for macaroni and cheese, or mix in a little honey, cinnamon and vanilla extract to make a sweet dip for sliced apples.

This quick method calls for boiling the cashews for a few minutes to soften them, but you can also put them in a bowl, cover them with water, and let them soak in the refrigerator overnight.

Make Ahead: The cashew cream can be refrigerated in an airtight container for up to 1 week.



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## Servings:

Tested size: 10 servings; makes 2 1/2 cups

## Ingredients

- 2 cups raw, unsalted cashews
- 1 cup cold water, or more as needed
- 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

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## Directions

Place the cashews in a medium saucepan and cover with water. Bring to a boil over high heat, then reduce the heat to medium; cook for 15 minutes, or until the nuts begin to plump slightly and soften.

Drain the cashews, then transfer them to a blender along with the 1 cup of cold water, lemon juice and salt. Puree until smooth, stopping to scrape the sides of the blender, as needed.

If the mixture seems too thick while blending, add more water, one tablespoon at a time. Use right away, or transfer to an airtight container and refrigerate for up to 1 week.

*Variations, next page*

## VARIATIONS

### Maple Cinnamon Cashew Cream

1 cup cashew cream  
1 tablespoon maple syrup (add more or less to taste)  
1 teaspoon cinnamon  
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

Place all ingredients in a bowl together and mix thoroughly. Perfect for dipping sliced apples and pretzel sticks.

### Cashew "Cheese" Sauce

1/2 cup carrots, roughly chopped  
1 small onion, quartered  
1 cup cashew cream  
1 teaspoon garlic powder  
1/2 teaspoon paprika  
1/2 teaspoon ground mustard  
Salt and pepper to taste

Place the carrots and onion in a small saucepan and cover with water, then bring to a boil and cook until soft, about 5 to 8 minutes. Drain off and reserve any excess water. Place the carrots and onion in a blender with the cashew cream, garlic powder, paprika, and ground mustard and blend until smooth, then season to taste with salt and pepper. At this point, you can mix it with two cups of hot cooked macaroni and serve immediately, or pour into a baking dish, top with Panko bread crumbs, and bake for 20 minutes at 350°F.

*Variation:* add 2 tablespoons of salsa to the finished sauce and serve as a dip with tortilla chips.

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### Recipe Source

Adapted from ["Yum Universe: Infinite Possibilities for a Gluten-Free, Plant-Powerful, Whole-Food Lifestyle,"](#) by Heather Crosby (BenBella Books, 2014).

Tested by Kristen Hartke. Demonstrated at the [2018 Real Food for Kids Culinary Challenge & Wellness Expo](#)