

Plant-Based Baked Macaroni & Cheese

Step 1: Make the Bread Crumbs

- Cornflake crumbs (recipe adapted by Dr. Serna)

Step 2: Starting the Sauce

- 1 medium onion, diced (approx. 1 cup)
- 3 carrots, diced (approx. 1 1/2 cup)
- 1 shallot, diced (approx. 3 tbsp)
- 2 to 3 yellow potatoes, diced (approx. 2 1/2 cup)
- 3 cloves garlic, roughly chopped
- 1/2 cup raw cashews
- 2 1/2 to 3 cups of water

Method: To start, first gather and prepare your mise en place. Note that the ingredients do not need to be perfectly cut as they will be blended later — they just need to be even, so that they cook at the same rate.

- In a medium-sized pot, add the onions, shallots, carrots, potatoes, garlic, cashews and water. Note: The vegetables should be just barely covered with water — adjust the amount as needed. Bring the water and vegetables to a boil and then reduce the heat to low, cover the pot and let simmer for 15 minutes, or until the vegetables are cooked through and tender.
- In the meantime, you can gather and prep some of the ingredients for the next step.

Step 3: Blending & Finishing the Sauce

- 2 tbsp non-dairy butter (optional)
- 1 tsp sea salt, or to taste
- ground white pepper, to taste
- 1/2 to 1 tsp truffle oil, or to taste (optional)
- 2 tbsp Dijon mustard
- 1 tbsp lemon juice, white wine or beer
- 1/2 cup nutritional yeast
- 1/2 tsp turmeric
- 1/8 tsp cayenne, or to taste
- 1/4 tsp paprika

Method: To finish the sauce, in a high-speed blender, combine together the cooked vegetables (along with the cooking liquid), Dijon mustard, lemon juice, butter and seasonings. **A Few Notes:**

- If using beer, the amount can be increased to 3 or 4 tablespoons, or to taste.
- While the butter can be omitted from this recipe, it does give the sauce a bit of added creaminess.
- We recommend using a non-smoked paprika for this recipe; however, if you really like smoked paprika, feel free to experiment.
- Blend the mixture until completely smooth. If needed, add a bit of water to thin the sauce out to your liking.
- If using, add the truffle oil. Pulse once or twice and taste for seasoning, adding more salt, pepper, truffle oil and/or nutritional yeast, as needed.
- **NOTE:** This sauce can be used as a topping for other foods such as steamed vegetables.

Step 4: Cooking the Pasta & Assembling the Dish

- 2 tsp sea salt, or to taste
- 500 gr pkg macaroni, or pasta of choice
- salt and pepper, to taste
- 2 tbsp nutritional yeast

Method: To cook the pasta, bring a large pot of water to a rapid boil and then add the salt, followed by the pasta. Cook the pasta according to the package, or until it is just al dente. In the meantime, preheat oven to 350°F (175°C). Once the pasta is done, reserve 1 cup of the cooking liquid and then immediately drain and rinse the pasta with cold water. At this point add the pasta to a large bowl and season it with salt, pepper and nutritional yeast. If making ahead, add a bit of oil or non-dairy butter to the pasta, to prevent it from sticking together. Also, reserve the 1 cup of cooking liquid as well — you will mostly likely need it to thin out the sauce later. Next, add the sauce. Ideally, you should have approximately 6 cups of sauce and 11 cups of cooked pasta. If you have less sauce than this, you may want to reserve some of the pasta for another use or add a bit of the reserved cooking liquid. The pasta and sauce ratio is important, otherwise the dish dries out too much during baking. Next, pour the mixture into a 9×12 baking dish (3 qt or 2.85L capacity) and top with the reserved breadcrumbs.

Step 5: Baking the Dish

- **Method:** Bake the dish for 30 minutes, or until the cheese sauce is bubbling and the top has turned a nice golden brown color. If needed, the broiler can be turned on for a minute or two, at the end, to give the top a nice golden finish, but keep a close eye on it as it will color very quickly. Serve with some freshly ground black pepper and a side salad, or your favorite vegetable and enjoy! This dish is also very nice with a bit of finely chopped sautéed kale folded into the noodles and sauce, just before the breadcrumbs are added.

