



Nourishing compassion for our bodies, the earth, and all beings.

Cheeze Pleeze!

How to feed your cheese-eating habit energy with plant-based, baby cow friendly alternatives

You think you are craving cheese. But, looking deeply we see many things. We consider the little calf who is being denied his food and destined for the veal market. We see his mother, living a life sentence of separation, discomfort, then painful death. Seeing this, you can wish for another path. Yet, cheese-eating is one of the hardest habits for us to change when we try to be more plant-based. The good news is there are many good resources for making alternative cheese.

The Vegan Pantry and ***Artisan Vegan Cheese*** by Miyoko Schinner are excellent places to start. Her method ranges from crazy simple to more complicated (with good results). Many of these cheezes are cultured with 'rejuvelac'¹. These recipes are quite easy and none of them take much time. But, steps are often spread out over a series of days, so they do take some planning.

The Ultimate Uncheese Cookbook by Jo Stepaniak is also an easy and delicious cookbook. Also, it has great recipes for 'cheesy' dishes that we know and crave. Mac and cheeze, cheezy soups, etc....all are in here!

Some of our Favorites Cheeze Recipes

Luckily, the many great cooks of our own Mindful Cooking have taken on this issue already. You can access the Cheese collection here : http://mindfulcooking.org/browse?taxonomy_vocabulary_3_tid=294&title .

Many cheese alternative recipes call for cashews. But, there are even options to this! If you want to avoid cashews, you can try the Minimalist Baker's:

- Cashew-less Vegan Queso: <http://minimalistbaker.com/cashew-less-vegan-queso/>
- Green Chili Queso: <http://minimalistbaker.com/vegan-green-chili-queso/>

Parmesan Many Ways

One of the easiest and most satisfying cheezes is parmesan. You can easily adapt any of these recipes to taste.

Pecan Parmesan

In a food processor, combine ½ cup toasted pecans, 1.5 teaspoons nutritional yeast, 1-3 teaspoons of olive oil, and a pinch of salt to taste. Pulse until it looks good, tasting as you go!

Pine-nut Parmesan

In a food processor, combine 1 cup pine nuts (toasted if you want a deeper flavor), 1 cup nutritional yeast (or less depending on your taste), 1/2 teaspoon of salt. Pulse until it is the texture you like. Add some olive oil and get another texture option. You can also add other flavorings if you like, such as rosemary or oregano.

Almond Parmesan

½ cup almonds (blanched if you want a lighter color) or white sesame seeds

2 tablespoons nutritional yeast

1-2 teaspoons light or chickpea miso

Salt to taste

Grind nuts almost to a fine powder.

Add remaining ingredients and pulse until it's the texture you like.

¹ Rejuvelac is an enzyme laden liquid made from sprouted grains of many types. One of the quickest and easiest ways to make it is using sprouted quinoa. Here's one way to make it <http://rawmazing.com/recipe/rejuvelac/>

Vegan Parmesan “Cheeze”

This delicious topping may be used on pizza, pasta, salads, tacos, rice and beans, baked potato, or on steamed veggies.

- 1 cup almonds
- 1 cup nutritional yeast flakes
- 2 teaspoons onion powder
- 2 teaspoons garlic powder
- ½ - 1 teaspoon salt, depending on desired saltiness; use the lower amount if you need to or want to reduce your sodium intake

1. Grind almonds in a blender or Vita-Mix. Stop before it starts to clump or get pasty.
2. Add other ingredients and blend briefly, to mix.

Makes about 1 1/2 cups, **Prep time:** 5-10 minutes

Recipe from the Alaska Vegan Society, at www.alaskaveg.org



Cheezy Sauce

This is great as a dip for chips, over taco salad, on tacos or burritos, over vegetables (such as steamed broccoli), and over baked potatoes. You may also sauté veggies, pour cheesy sauce over the veggies, then serve the cheesy veggies over baked potatoes. The sauce may also be added to broccoli soup for broccoli-cheddar soup or put over macaroni for macaroni and cheese. The sky is the limit!

- 1/4 cup raw almonds or raw cashews (cashews are softer, so may work better in some blenders)
- 2 cups water
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 cup nutritional yeast (flakes)
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 3 tablespoons cornstarch* or arrowroot (If you want a thicker sauce, add up to 1 tablespoon more arrowroot or cornstarch.)
- 1 teaspoon - 1 tablespoon lemon juice to taste. (More makes it a sharper cheese flavor; less is a mild cheese flavor.)
- (Optional - for color) 1/3 cup red bell pepper, approximately or 1 small jar pimentos
- (Optional - blend 1 teaspoon canned jalapeños for a great nacho-style cheese)

1. Put all ingredients in a blender and blend until smooth.
2. Pour into a saucepan and bring to a boil while stirring constantly. It will thicken to a nacho cheese consistency.
3. Serve hot (left-over sauce may be stored in the refrigerator, then thinned with a little soy* milk/almond milk/rice milk, stirred, and heated)

This tastes just as good without the red pepper or pimento, but if you want it to look convincingly orange, add the color. (Did you know that cheddar cheese is also orange because of added coloring? The milk doesn't come out of the cow orange!)

Makes 2 ½ cups, **Prep Time:** 8 minutes, **Cook time:** 8-10 minutes

Recipe from Alaska Vegan Society, www.alaskaveg.org.