

A VEGAN'S DIARY

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The trick to vegan cooking in the simplest terms is this – you deconstruct a dish, identify the animal-based ingredients, and then replace them with the plant-based ones. Of course, one has to learn a thing or two about the plant-based alternatives first, but that is the easy (read boring) part. The fun begins when you realise that you have a plethora of options to choose from and can really experiment with a recipe in a way which you never thought was possible.

Got (plant) Milk?

You need to unleash the mad scientist in you, and look at an ingredient in terms of how it “behaves” when tampered with, and not what it's called or what you are used to seeing it as. You want to mimic the smell, taste, and texture of your favourite dish, and when you find the winning combination of your plant-based ingredients to do just that, the end result is often better than the original! Let me clarify further. Think milk. What does it do? It thickens, it whitens, and it “kormanizes” (just go with it). Since each plant milk is of a different taste and consistency, you may want to learn a little about each one to enjoy them at their best. For instance, *rice milk* has a thin consistency and is great in tea and coffee. But if you make rice pudding with it, then you are basically cooking rice in rice, and I will not be held responsible for the result!

Personally, I would pick the creamiest, thickest milk such a coconut/soy/oat milk to make my desserts and the same to thicken my kormas and curries. But when I am making a spreadable cheese, sour cream, or alfredo sauce, then it's got to be cashews. Cashews, when blended or pureed, have no pulp, welcome other flavours and ingredients like a friendly host, and spread on bread like a dream! Give this a try.

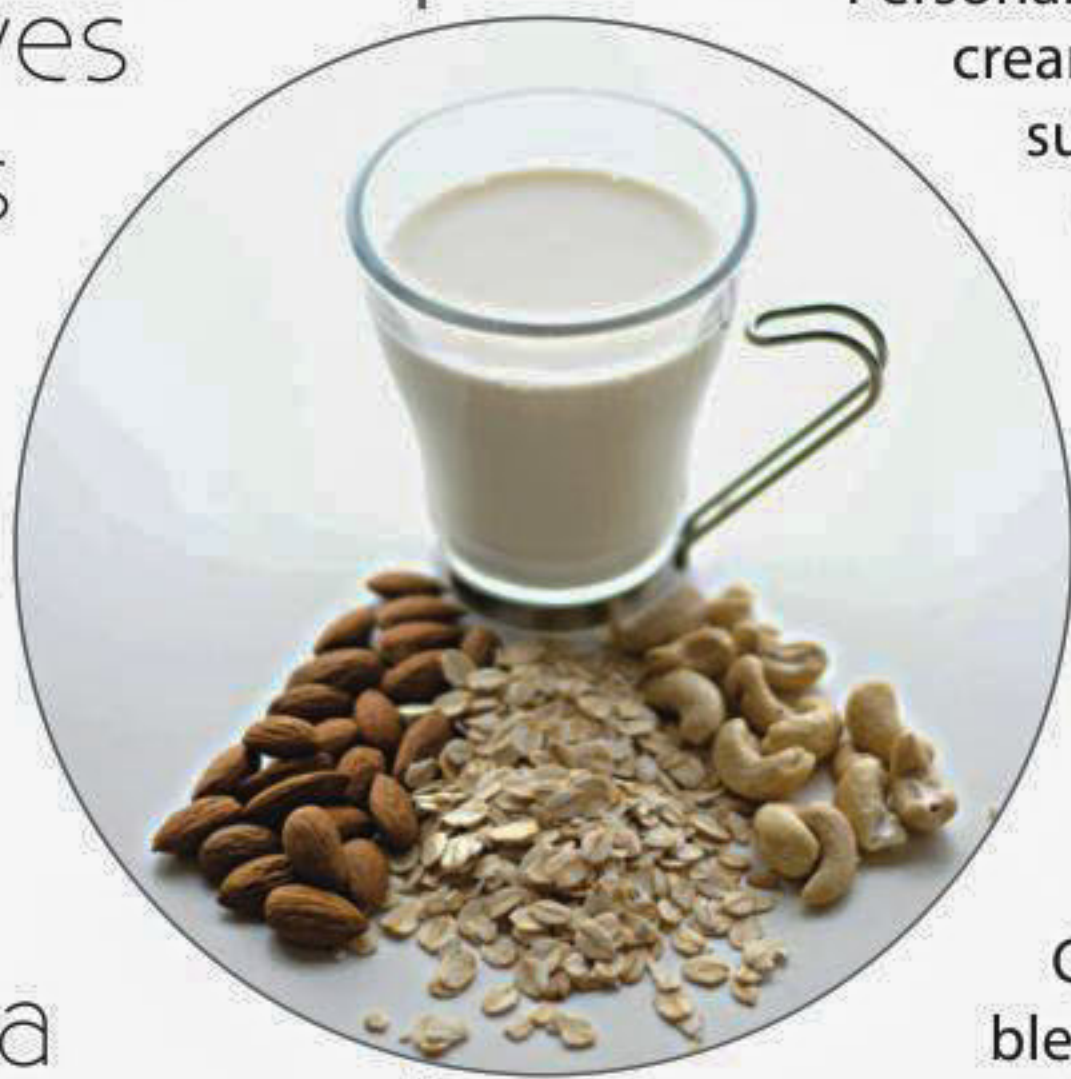
RECIPE FOR CASHEW CREAM CHEESE

Ingredients

1 cup raw cashews (soaked in water for 6 to 8 hours)
½ tsp salt

Method

Pour out the water from the cashews and



What's in 1 Cup of Whole Milk



149 calories
7.7g fat
8g protein
28% DV calcium

How milks compare*

	Flax	Soy	Almond	Rice	Coconut
Calories	50	90	60	120	80
Total Fat	2.5g	3.5g	2.5g	2.5g	5g
Protein	0g	6g	1g	1g	1g
Calcium** (% Daily Value)	30%	45%	45%	30%	45%



place them in a blender. Make this into a smooth paste adding a little water. Now leave this to ferment in a glass container for 8–24 hours depending on the room temperature, until it begins to smell sour. Add salt. Mix well and serve. Refrigerate to store.

This can keep for 10 days or more. It is ideal for making cheesy sauces, dips and spreads or can even just be directly spread on bread.

It can even be used on baked dishes and will brown slightly when baked.

Note- The fermentation time differs based on the room temperature and the

climate of the place where you are. Please keep an eye on the cheese after 8 hrs. It should be placed in the refrigerator after it begins to smell sour. Mix in herbs of your choice and serve over bread or crackers! Serves 4–6.

Now you must be wondering why go through all this trouble? Why not just stick to dairy milk like a “normal” person? After all, you are not killing the animal to extract her milk and everyone knows that when we don't drink gallons of dairy milk every day, we catch the brittle bone disease, shrivel up and die. NOT TRUE!

Some combinations never change

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