

Vegan Cheddar Cheese

Recipe is from <https://thehiddenveggies.com/vegan-cheddar-cheese/#wprm-recipe-container-6381>. It has been reformatted for legibility.

This homemade **vegan cheddar cheese** recipe will amaze you! It has a rich and creamy texture with a sharp cheddar cheese bite! You can slice it, shred it, and even make it meltable! Made with rich and creamy coconut milk and no cashews, this recipe gives you a silky smooth texture that can't be beaten!

Ingredients and substitutions

- Coconut Milk: a 13.5 oz can of full-fat coconut milk with make your cheese rich and creamy plus 1/2 cup of water. Or you can use any plant-based milk that you want plus oil instead of the coconut milk:
- Plant Milk: I like soy milk because it's fairly rich and thick, but you can use whatever plant-based milk that you like. Just make sure it is PLAIN and not vanilla flavored. You can use sweetened or unsweetened depending on the flavor you want to achieve with your cheese.
- Oil: I like to use refined coconut oil, but any oil will work. You can also omit the oil if you wish, it just won't be as rich and creamy.
- Agar Agar: This is a clear vegan gelatin derived from seaweed and it's absolutely essential for making the cheese firm. If you leave it out you will have vegan nacho cheese sauce, which is delicious, but not sliceable cheese. Use the powdered agar agar instead of the flakes if you can find it. It can be expensive, but it's a great price if you order it on Amazon.

- Nutritional Yeast: This is a yellow powder that has a cheese flavor. This is a key ingredient to give it a cheesy flavor and cannot be omitted. You can read more about it in this article about nutritional yeast.
- Lemon Juice: For the tang.
- Onion Powder: For flavor.
- Paprika: For flavor and color. (The red paprika mixed with the yellow turmeric gives it a beautiful orange color!) You can also use smoked paprika for a delicious smokey flavor.
- Miso: For a cheesy bite. This is a key ingredient in giving a cheddar flavor to the cheese. (If you are making this cheese soy-free, you can use chickpea miso).
- Water: For dissolving the miso paste Salt: To give it flavor.
- Turmeric: For color. (optional)
- Tapioca Starch: If you want a cheddar cheese that melts and stretches you can add tapioca starch. (Tapioca flour is the same thing). This will make the cheese softer, but it will melt easier and get stretchy when it melts. You will need to add 2 tbsp. + 1 tsp. of the tapioca. I know that this is a weird measurement, but that is the exact amount that I have found works the best.

Helpful tools

- Saucepan: To cook the cheese on the stove-top.
- Whisk: For stirring your cheese sauce.
- Glass Container: to use as the mold. You can use any heat-safe container even just a plain bowl. I like to use Snapware containers because they have a lid that seals tightly and will keep your cheese fresh. (You can also use a silicone mold, but I think it gives your food a funny taste).

Instructions

1. Prepare a cheese mold by spraying a smooth glass container with a little oil.
2. Pour all of the ingredients except for the water and miso into a medium-sized saucepan.
3. Stir the ingredients and turn on the heat to medium.
4. Cook your cheese sauce until it has slowly boiled for 6 minutes while stirring frequently. (It needs to boil for 6 minutes to fully melt and activate the agar agar).
5. Mix the miso and water until the miso is dissolved completely and pour it into the cheese sauce.
6. Stir the cheese sauce until the miso is incorporated.
7. Pour the cheese into the chosen mold.
8. Cool for about 15 minutes on the countertop and then put it in the refrigerator uncovered for 2 more hours until it cools and sets completely.
9. Serve or put in a sealed container.

How to make meltable cheddar

1. Add all of the ingredients to a saucepan except only add 1/4 cup of water instead of 1/2 cup and only add 4 tsp of agar agar instead of 2 tbsp.
2. Heat the cheese sauce over medium heat until it begins to boil.
3. Turn down the heat until it is just barely bubbling and allow to boil for 5 minutes while stirring frequently.
4. Add 2 tbsp plus 1 tsp of tapioca starch (7 tsp) to 1/4 cup of cold water and stir until it dissolves.
5. Mix the miso in with the starch and water until the miso is dissolved completely and pour it into the cheese sauce.

6. Add the starch, miso, and water mixture to the boiling cheese sauce while stirring it in with a whisk and then cook for an additional 1 minute. (Your cheese will become very thick and stretchy).
7. Pour into a glass container and allow to cool uncovered in the refrigerator for at least 3 hours before shredding.

Pro tips

- Stir the cheese sauce very frequently. Do not walk away from it while cooking.
- Keep in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 5 days or in the freezer for up to 3 months.
- Make sure to measure the ingredients carefully! Slight changes in the amount of liquid, the agar agar, or the tapioca starch can change the texture of your cheese a lot!
- Simmer the cheddar cheese for 6 minutes to melt the agar agar and allow it to bind completely with the ingredients.
- Adding the miso at the end makes it so you do not kill the beneficial probiotic in the miso.
- Use the tapioca starch if you are using this cheese make anything hot like a grilled cheese where you would want it to melt.

Troubleshooting

Nearly everyone loves this cheddar cheese recipe and it works great for almost everyone. Getting the cheese firm enough seems to be the only place people ever have trouble. Occasionally people will say that their cheese didn't set correctly or it's like jello.

These are my tips if this happens to you:

- Use agar agar powder not flakes if you can and measure carefully. Make sure to use 2 full tablespoons, not 2 teaspoons!
- I use Telephone brand agar agar, since I can easily find it at my local Asian market. It comes in small packs so it won't go bad, and I know that it sets well every time. There are many other brands and there seem to be different strengths of agar agar especially in Europe.
- If your cheese is too soft or jello-like, your agar agar is not strong enough. Increase the agar agar next time you make it. If it is very soft you can add a tiny bit of water and remelt it and add more agar agar and boil it for an additional 6 minutes.
- If your agar agar is not working, swap it out in equal parts for Kapa carrageenan.

Frequently asked questions

- Can I use arrowroot or any other type of starch? No, unfortunately, the only thing that will make your cheese melt and stretch is tapioca starch, if you use something else in its place, it just won't work as well.
- What can I use instead of miso? If you want to make it soy-free or don't have miso, you can swap the miso out for tahini. This will also give it a little cheddar style bite.
- Can I use agar agar flakes instead of powder? Yes, you can, however, it doesn't melt as quickly, and you will need more of it. You will need to use 3 times as many flakes as powder, so use 6 tbsp of agar agar flakes instead of 2 tbsp of the powder to make this cheese.
- Can I add spices? Yes, you can add whatever herbs and spices that you would like. A dash of smoked paprika or liquid smoke is yummy or you can use herbs like in my vegan garlic and herb cheese recipe.

Storage

- Refrigerator: Store the cheese in a sealed container in the fridge for up to 5 days
- Freezing: You can freeze it for up to 3 months. I find it easiest to slice or shred the cheese and then freeze it in an air-tight freezer bag. This way you can use small portions of it without having to thaw the whole block.