

CREAMY VEGAN ONION GARLIC DIP

INGREDIENTS

- 2 teaspoons olive oil , make the dip oil-free by sautéing the onion in a few tablespoons of water instead of oil. it will be more difficult to get them really caramelized though so oil is the best option.
- 1 whole head garlic , not individual cloves, the whole thing
- 300g | 2 heaping cups onion , peeled, cut in half then sliced finely
- 2 teaspoons sugar , optional
- 349g | 12.3 oz silken tofu
- 1 tablespoon nutritional yeast
- 2 teaspoons white miso paste , optional - can be omitted but if you have some it's worth using it
- 1 tablespoon white wine vinegar , or lemon juice
- ½ teaspoon salt , plus a little more to taste if necessary
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme , you can use fresh instead if you have it and feel free to add more if you want a stronger type flavour
- 60mls | ¼ cup plant-based milk , you might not need it all

METHOD

Preheat oven to 400°F. Keep the garlic head all in once piece and slice about ¼ inch straight off the top of the whole garlic head exposing the inside of the cloves inside. Take a square of tin foil and put the garlic head cut side down in the middle of the foil and wrap it tightly. Bake in the oven for around 40 minutes. After this time check it. It should be really soft if you give it a squeeze. Give it another 5 minutes or so if it's not. Once completely soft remove from the oven and allow to cool in the foil.

While the garlic is roasting, heat a sauté pan over a medium low heat with the olive oil (or a few tablespoons of water). Once hot add the sliced onion. Cook slowly for around 30 minutes, stirring frequently. If you use water you will need to add a few drops more here and there to stop the onions sticking. Once the onion is really soft and starting to go golden, add the sugar (optional but recommended for a more caramelized result) and stir well then continue to cook for another 5 minutes or so until a deep golden brown then remove from the heat and set aside.

Add the tofu, nutritional yeast, white miso, vinegar and salt to a blender. Take the roasted garlic head and gently squeeze the garlic out of the papery skins and into the blender along with half of the onion and a few drops of the milk. Blend until completely smooth. Check the consistency and add a little more milk if you prefer a slightly thinner dip. I used a full ¼ cup but you might prefer less. Add the thyme and the rest of the onion and stir to distribute. If you prefer it completely smooth you can blend all the onion up into it. I like having some of the golden strands through mine for texture. Spoon into a serving dish.

Optional : Garnish with more caramelized onion or some fresh thyme leaves.

RECIPE NOTES

Will keep for up to 1 week if refrigerated in a sealed container.

CRANBERRY PECAN BRUSSELS SPROUT SALAD

INGREDIENTS

Salad

- 600g / 5 heaping cups Brussels sprouts
- 90g / ¾ slightly heaping cup pecan nuts , walnuts make a good sub.
- 120g / 1 cup dried cranberries
- 1 pomegranate , optional

Dressing

- 1 large orange , zest and juice
- 1 shallot , or a small chunk of sweet onion
- 2 tablespoons maple syrup
- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar , or white wine vinegar
- 5 pecan nuts , walnuts make a good sub. For a nut-free option see recipe notes.
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- salt , to taste
- black pepper , to taste

METHOD

Wash the Brussels sprouts, removing any old leaves and the stubby bit of stalk. Shred them as finely as you can and put them into a large bowl. Chop the nuts into small pieces and add them too along with the dried cranberries.

Blend the dressing ingredients together until completely smooth. If you prefer a slightly thinner dressing just add a few drops of water until you get to the consistency you like.

Pour the dressing over the salad and toss to distribute evenly. Sprinkle with a few extra cranberries and pecans if you wish and also some optional pomegranate arils too if you have them.

RECIPE NOTES

I don't recommend you buy pre-sliced Brussel's sprouts for this salad. They are generally cut quite thickly and having thin slices really makes a difference to flavour and eatability. Pre-chopped veggies also are often a bit dry and withered around the edges. Fresh is best and will pay dividends in flavour, texture and appearance.

This salad will keep well for a couple of days in the fridge once dressed. The sliced sprouts don't go slimy like lettuce does. If you are storing it though I would advise leaving the chopped nuts out until just before you serve to keep them nice and crunchy.

This salad can easily be made nut-free. Just omit the nuts from the dressing. It is still really good without them. And in the salad you can either omit the nuts completely or use some pumpkin seeds or sunflower seeds instead.

VEGAN MEATLOAF WITH GRAVY

INGREDIENTS

Meatloaf

1 small onion , finely chopped, golf ball size
2 large cloves of garlic finely chopped
198g | 1 cup cooked red lentils (measured after cooked)- do not overcook the lentils. They should be just soft. Red Lentils don't take long to cook at all and if they are overcooked and soggy it will make the meatloaf soggy. For tips on cooking see recipe notes.
198g | 1 cup cooked green lentils (measured after cooked)- do not overcook the lentils or the meatloaf will end up soggy. They need to be just tender. For tips on cooking see recipe notes.
226g | 3 cups mushrooms , finely chopped (measured after chopping). White, button, cremini (brown) or portobello are all fine to use.
62g | 1/2 cup walnut pieces , To make nut-free you can sub the walnuts for half a cup of oats or half a cup of sunflower seeds
4 tablespoons | 1/4 cup ground flax seeds
1 cup / 108 g bread crumbs , made from a stale loaf of bread, or use panko crumbs
90 g | 1 cup oat , rice, spelt or wholewheat flour (see recipe note for how to make oat flour)
1 tablespoon Tamari (or coconut aminos , or soy sauce)
1 teaspoons salt
1 teaspoons pepper
2 teaspoons dried thyme
up to 120mls | 1/2 cup water , you might not need any at all

Gravy

- 2 medium onions , chopped
- 1 tablespoon nutritional yeast
- 2 tablespoons tamari , or soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon arrowroot or cornstarch (or just regular all purpose flour)
- 480mls | 2 cups mushroom broth , or 2 cups of water and 3 mushrooms

METHOD

Preheat oven to 370°.

Makes sure everything is finely chopped. A food processor makes this quick and easy. Put all of the meatloaf ingredients into a large bowl except the water. Mix well together. It's much easier to get your hands in there and squidge it all together well. You need it so that it sticks together nicely when you squeeze it with your hands. If it does this easily then don't add any water. If it's still a little crumbly and wont come together add water very gradually until it just starts coming together. I often need no water at all. Definitely don't add more water than it needs or it will make the loaf soggy.

Lay a strip of parchment paper down the length of a loaf tin with enough length either end to act as handles for pulling the finished loaf out (my tin is 8.5 x 4.5 x 2.75 inches. Any tin roughly that size will be fine). Spoon in the mixture and pack down really tightly.

Bake in the preheated oven for 50-60 minutes. Keep an eye on it towards the end. You want it to go a bit crusty and brown on the top but not too dark. You can cover it with a piece of foil if it does start going too brown. Remove from the oven and leave to cool in the tin, covered tightly in foil for at least 15 minutes but up to 30 is ok. Then remove and slice.

For the gravy: Sauté the onion slowly over a low heat until a deep golden brown. Transfer to a blender with all of the other ingredients and blend until very smooth. Pour into a pan and stir over a medium heat until thickened and piping hot. If you prefer your gravy a little thinner just add some boiling water from a kettle and stir well until you get the consistency you like.

ROAST STUFFED PUMPKIN

INGREDIENTS

- 1 medium pumpkin , or round squash, (approximately 8 inch diameter - If your pumpkin is very different in size then please see the recipe notes)
- 1 cup cooked & cooled rice , any kind of rice is fine although there will be more flavour/texture if you use wild rice
- 2 teaspoon olive oil , optional
- 1 medium onion , chopped finely
- 3 large cloves garlic , chopped finely
- 10 mushrooms , chopped into small pieces
- 60g | 1/2 cup walnut pieces
- 60g | 1/2 cup dried cranberries
- 1 large handful spinach , chopped
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- salt & pepper

METHOD

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F & toast the walnuts in a fry pan over a medium heat for a minute or two moving constantly. Remove from heat, pour into a small bowl and set aside.

Sauté the onions and garlic in one teaspoon of the oil (in the same pan) until just starting to turn golden. If you wish to keep the recipe oil-free use a tablespoon or two of water to sauce instead. Add the mushrooms and cook for 1 minute longer then remove from the heat and allow to cool. Carefully cut the top off the pumpkin (about the top third). Set the top aside. If you can't see the seedy innards then just use a small sharp knife to cut a circle out of the flesh at the top and pull it out like a plug.

Remove the stringy innards and seeds and discard. Brush the inside of the pumpkin with the remaining 1 teaspoon of olive oil. Omit if you want the recipe to be oil-free. Season the inside generously with salt and pepper. Place all the filling ingredients into a bowl and mix well. Spoon into the pumpkin cavity, pressing down well as you go. You want it packed in very tightly. Keep going until full. Place the pumpkin top back on. Wrap completely and tightly in tin foil. At this stage the pumpkin can be stored in the fridge for a day or two before baking if you want to get it ready ahead of time.

Place on a tray and bake for around 1 hr 30 mins or until tender. Check it by pulling back some foil and inserting a knife or a fork into the side. If it is soft then it is ready. Remove from the oven and leave for at least 15 - 30 minutes before slicing.

RECIPE NOTES

If your pumpkin is significantly different in size to mine then there is a trick for you to work out how much rice you need to fill it. Just cut the top off and remove the stringy innards and seeds as per my directions. Place a plastic bag inside the cavity and put enough rice in the bag to fill a little under half of the pumpkin. remove the bag, add the rice to a pan and cook as per directions on packet. You may also need to adjust the other ingredients slightly to suit your either smaller or larger pumpkin.

This pumpkin reheats very well. Just wrap your leftovers in tin foil and bake for 20-30 minute at 400.

HEALTHY NO OIL CRISPY ROASTED POTATOES

INGREDIENTS

- 900g / 2 lbs potatoes , see notes
- 80mls / 1/3 cup aquafaba , the liquid from a can of chickpeas
- 3 tablespoons semolina , cornmeal can also be used but make sure it isn't too coarse. Semolina is not gluten-free so be sure to use the cornmeal option if you need to keep this recipe gluten-free
- Salt
- Pepper

METHOD

Preheat oven to 450°F

Peel the potatoes and cut into chunks. Timings here are based on a medium potato being cut into about 5 pieces. Make sure all pieces are pretty even.

Place the potatoes in a pan, cover with water and bring to a boil. Once boiling the should take about 5 - 6 minutes to become just fork tender. As soon as they do, drain through a colander then leave for a few minutes to steam dry before returning to the pan.

Line a baking tray or roaster with parchment paper or a Silpat. This is essential because no oil is used.

Add the aquafaba and semolina to the potatoes, put the lid on the pan and shake vigorously a good few times to rough up the potatoes, then dig in with a spoon and stir them around a bit to get the potatoes slurry that has settled on the bottom to coat them thoroughly.

Tip the potatoes onto the lined tray and spread them out so they are not touching each other then season with a generous amount of salt and freshly ground pepper.

Place in the hot oven and cook for 25 minutes. Remove, flip them all over then return to the oven and cook for around another 20 minutes or until a lovely golden brown. The time will vary a little depending on your oven and the type of pan you are cooking them in.

Serve immediately.

RECIPE NOTES

Using the right kind of potato is really important when it comes to great roast potatoes. A high starch content is necessary to get a lovely fluffy inside and a crusty exterior. Russet potatoes are ideal or Maris Piper in the UK. And even though they aren't really classed as a high starch potato, Yukon Gold work well too.

PUMPKIN PIE WITH CARAMEL SAUCE

INGREDIENTS

For the pastry

- 240g | 2 cups wholewheat flour (you can sub this for white if you prefer)
- 110g | 1/2 cup coconut oil It needs to be very hard. If yours is soft then put it in the fridge for an hour before you make the pastry.
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 3 - 4 tablespoons ice cold water

For the filling

- 1 can of full fat coconut milk (My tin was 400mls but if yours is one that is 398mls that will be fine too)
- 450g | 2 cups unsweetened pumpkin puree
- 150g | 3/4 cup coconut sugar (any other granulated sugar will work too)
- 4 tablespoons arrowroot powder (you can sub this for cornstarch if you prefer)
- 1 1/2 tablespoons vanilla extract
- 2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice (see recipe notes if this is unavailable where you are)
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

For the salted caramel sauce

- 100g | 1/2 cup of coconut sugar (sometimes called coconut palm sugar (I have not tried this with any other sugar so I can't guarantee it will work as well if you make a sub))
- 2 tablepoons water
- 2 tablespoons tahini
- 2 tablespoons coconut oil (solid measurement)
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- For decoration
- Chopped Walnuts or Pecans (optional)

METHOD

Pastry

Add the flour, solid coconut oil and salt to a food processor and process until well combined. You might need to scrape down the edges with a spatula once. Do not over mix, you want it just combined.

Gradually add your water 1 tablespoon at a time while the food processor is running. I used 4 tablespoons but yours might vary slightly. It should start balling up as it whizzes around but if you aren't sure turn it off and pull a bit out with your hands. If it is nice and soft and squeezes together easily then there is enough water. If it feels a little dry and crumbly then add a little more water.

If you do not have a food processor then add the flour, salt and coconut oil to a chilled bowl. Rub the coconut oil into the flour as quickly as you can with your finger tips. Once it looks bread crumbly gradually add the water, stirring with a knife until a dough starts to form and you can gently bring it together in your hands.

Line your pie dish immediately, unless your kitchen is very warm and the pastry is too soft. If this is the case wrap it in cling wrap and refrigerate for 10 minutes before continuing. (I used a 9 inch dish but any similar size will be fine, it will just end up a bit deeper or shallower so you might need to adjust the cooking time slightly).

Lightly flour your work surface and roll out the pastry. Pastry made with coconut oil is a little more difficult to work with than regular pastry so if you have trouble rolling it out just put the ball of pastry into the pie dish and press it into place with your finger tips.

PUMPKIN PIE WITH CAMEL SAUCE continued

Place the lined tin in the fridge and let it rest for 30 minutes while you preheat the oven to 400 degrees F.

Remove from the fridge and line the pastry with some baking parchment and fill with baking beans or dried rice to weigh everything down and to stop the pastry rising.

Place in the oven and bake for 15 mins. Lift out the baking parchment and beans/rice and bake again for 5 minutes.

Remove and turn the oven down to 350°F

Leave the pastry case to cool a bit while you make the filling.

For the filling

Add all of the filling ingredients to a blender.

Blend until very smooth.

Pour into the pastry case

Place in the oven and bake. The time it takes will vary depending on how deep your pie dish is. Mine is just over 2 inches deep and my pie took 60 minutes. If yours is very shallow then it will probably only take 35 - 40 minutes. When it is ready it will visibly 'look' set but still be pretty wobbly. Remove from the oven when it reaches this stage.

Allow to cool. Don't worry if it still feels a little loose.

Once cool enough, refrigerate for at least 2 - 3 hours.

Longer or overnight will be absolutely fine too.

For the caramel sauce

Add the coconut sugar and the water to a pan.

Place over a medium heat and cook until the sugar has completely dissolved and it is just starting to bubble. DO NOT STIR!! If you need to, just swirl the pan a bit. It will take 3 -4 minutes max.

Remove from the heat and add the tahini, salt and coconut oil. Put back over a very low heat and stir very well until it is all well combined. It is normal to see a few little light flecks through it.

Serve drizzled with warm caramel sauce and some whipped coconut cream.

RECIPE NOTES

As the caramel cools (or if you keep it in the fridge) it will become very thick. To loosen it up again all you need to do is warm it in the microwave for 10 - 20 seconds, or in a pan on the hob for a minute or so.

I used a 10 inch dish but any similar size will be fine, it will just end up a bit deeper or shallower so you might need to adjust the cooking time slightly I would suggest you weigh the flour and coconut oil when making the pastry if you want a perfect result.

If you cannot get Pumpkin Pie Spice where you are, it is very simple to make yourself and great for adding to all sorts of baked goods like apple pies or cakes. Here is a very simple recipe.

The pie and caramel sauce keep well in the fridge for a few days. The caramel sauce will firm up in the fridge but you can loosen it again by warming it gently either in a pan on the hob over very low heat or for a 20-30 seconds in a microwave.

SHOPPING LIST

PRODUCE

- 1 head & 5 cloves garlic
- 1 small onion , golf ball size
- 5 medium onions
- 1 shallot , or small onion
- 1 pomegranate , optional for the salad
- 2 large oranges
- 600g / 5 heaping cups Brussels sprouts
- 326g / 8½ oz / 0.6lb mushrooms , white, crimini or baby portobellos
- 900g / 2lb potatoes , ideally russet, yukon gold or maris piper
- 1 medium pumpkin (around 8 inches across) , or any other roundish squash
- 1 large handful spinach
- 340g / 12oz / 3.5 cups fresh cranberries
- 1 medium pear
- 2 vegetables of choice (for sides) , to be steamed
- A selection of raw veggies to serve with the garlic onion dip , optional, you can just use tortilla chips to make life easier

REFRIGERATED/FROZEN ITEMS

- 349g / 12.3 oz silken tofu
- 2 teaspoons sweet white miso , nice to have but not essential. It can be omitted
- 60mls / ¼ cup unsweetened plant-based milk
- vegan whipped cream or vanilla ice cream , to serve with the pumpkin pie

NUTS, SEEDS & DRIED FRUIT

- 110g / 1 heaping cup pecan nuts
- 180g / 1½ cup dried cranberries
- 140g / 1 heaping cup walnut pieces
- 4 tablespoons ground flax seed

CANNED/JAR/PACKET GOODS

- 1 can (around 400mls) full fat coconut milk , **MUST** be full fat
- 450g / 2 cups unsweetened pumpkin puree
- 2 tablespoons tahini , or other smooth nut butter
- 80mls / ⅓ cup aquafaba , liquid from a can of chickpeas
- 1 or 2 large bags of tortilla chips

SHOPPING LIST

HERBS & SPICES

- 3 teaspoons salt , + more to taste
- 1½ teaspoons ground black pepper , + more to taste
- 2 tablespoons nutritional yeast
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice
- 4 teaspoons dried thyme
- 1½ tablespoons vanilla extract

PANTRY ITEMS

- 4 teaspoons olive oil
- 2 teaspoons granulated sugar
- 250g / 1¼ cup coconut sugar
- 3 tablespoons white wine vinegar , or lemon juice
- 6 tablespoons maple syrup
- ½ cup dried red lentils
- ½ cup dried green lentils
- 300g / 2.5 cups wholewheat flour , This is to make the pie crust and also includes ½ cup for the meatloaf. If you are gluten-free you will need to make/buy a gluten-free pastry case for the pie and you won't need this flour. For the meatloaf sub oat or rice flour.
- 3 tablespoons tamari or soy sauce
- 5 tablespoons arrowroot powder , or cornstarch (cornflour if in the UK)
- 480mls / 2 cups mushroom broth , or other strongly flavoured veggie broth
- 3 tablespoons semolina , or corn meal (be sure to use corn meal if you are gluten free)
- 100g / ½ cup uncooked rice , any kind but brown or wild gives the best texture
- 110g / ½ cup + 2 tablespoons coconut oil
- ½ a medium loaf of bread (a few days old is best)

TIMELINE

3 DAYS BEFORE

Make the caramel sauce for the pumpkin pie and store in a sealed container in the fridge.

Make the Maple Cinnamon Cranberry Pear Sauce and store in a sealed container in the fridge.

Cook the lentils for the meatloaf and store in the fridge,

Make the gravy (you will find the recipe with the meatloaf recipe) and store in a sealed container in the fridge.

2 DAYS BEFORE

Prepare the meatloaf, fill the tin then wrap in foil or cling wrap and store in the fridge. You will cook it on the day.

Make the Creamy Vegan Garlic Onion Dip and store in a sealed container in the fridge.

1 DAY BEFORE

Make the pumpkin pie then refrigerate.

Cut the top off the pumpkin and scrape out the seeds and stringy bits. Wrap up well and store in the fridge.

Make the Cranberry Pecan Brussels Sprout Salad (reserving the nuts to add when serving to retain the crunch).

Peel the potatoes, chop them up, and leave in a pan covered with water.

ON THE DAY

Appetizers

Remove the dip from the fridge shortly before serving. Stir well and arrange with the tortilla chips and crudités.

Add the nuts to the Brussels Sprout Salad and stir well.

TIMELINE

MAIN COURSE

First thing in the morning, cook the rice for the stuffed pumpkin then cool quickly. Prepare the rest of the filling ingredients, mix all together and stuff then put the lid on and wrap tightly in foil.

Put the pumpkin in the oven on 400°F 3 hours before you want to serve. Remove after 90 minutes as per directions and leave tightly wrapped in it's foil on the counter.

Immediately turn the oven down to 370°F and put the meatloaf in the oven and cook for 50 minutes.

After the meatloaf has been in the oven for about 30 minutes, parboil the potatoes as per the roasted potato directions, then coat with aquafaba and semolina.

Remove the meatloaf from the oven, keeping it tightly wrapped on the counter and turn the oven up to 450°F. Don't be tempted to peek. Keep it wrapped tightly so it stays warm.

Roast the potatoes as directed and prepare the vegetables for steaming.

Start cooking the vegetables in the last 10 - 15 minutes and warm the pre-made gravy through in a pan gently.

Serve everything and don't forget the Maple Cinnamon Cranberry Sauce. The ingredients were on the list but I couldn't include a print out of the recipe here because it is not my recipe. It is the only recipe which you will have to visit the website for and print out separately. Here is the website address:

<https://www.veggieinspired.com/maple-cinnamon-cranberry-pear-sauce/>

Dessert

Try to remember to let the pie come to room temperature before serving.

Warm the ready-made caramel sauce very gently in a pan or in the microwave for 20-30 seconds before serving.

Serve with vegan ice-cream or vegan whipped cream