SAUCE INGREDIENTS

1 small butternut squash
¼ cup Earth Balance buttery spread
3 cups rice milk or other non-dairy milk
¼ cup cornstarch or arrowroot powder
2 small red bell peppers
2 cups nutritional yeast
2 tablespoon dijon mustard
2 teaspoon garlic powder
2 teaspoon onion powder
¼ cup lemon juice
1 tablespoon salt
½ teaspoons black pepper

ALMASEN INGREDIENTS

¼ cup almonds
2 tablespoons sesame seeds
Zest of 1 small lemon
Pinch of salt
1 tablespoon nutritional yeast

DIRECTIONS

1. Cut squash in half lengthwise and remove seeds. Brush seeded squash halves with oil and place on a foil-lined sheet pan, cut side down. Pour 1/4 cup water into the pan. Bake at 425 degrees for 45 minutes, until tender. Then cool.

2. Heat Earth Balance over medium heat. Pour in rice milk and cornstarch, and whisk. Continue this process until cornstarch is dissolved. Then turn up the heat to high. Whisk continuously and vigorously until the mixture boils and thickens. Then remove from heat.

3. When squash has cooled, peel it.

4. Seed and roughly chop the red peppers and place them in a large mixing bowl. Add the nutritional yeast, dijon mustard, garlic powder, onion powder, lemon juice, salt and pepper. Add the Earth Balance/ rice milk/ corn starch mixture and peeled squash.

5. Mix the contents of the mixing bowl, then puree in a food processor or with an immersion blender. You may have to process the mixture in batches if your food processor is small.

6. Voila, you have cheese sauce! Pour over cooked macaroni noodles and heat in a pot on the stove, or bake in a casserole pan in the oven. This sauce is also perfect for sautéing veggies or topping other types of noodles or grains, or whatever else you dream up!

7. Grind the almasen topping ingredients together in a food processor until it reaches a grainy, sandy consistency. Sprinkle on top of each bowl of mac & cheese. Makes a great salad & pizza topping as well!