



## Bitchin Baked Cauliflower (with No-Dairy Cheese Sauce)

Watch the YouTube demo via the link on the blog post

My love of cooking was gifted to me by my grandmothers, each teaching me different culinary techniques. One grandmother, a "scratch" cook from Portugal, made everything from basic ingredients without using pre-packaged foods. She used every part of an animal in her recipes and infused her dishes with dried spices to create delicious meals. The other, a "depression" cook, prepared hearty meals on a tight budget, often using canned goods and boxed foods due to their long shelf life.

Both grandmothers instilled in me the joy and love found in every slice, chop, and minute spent at the stove, and I cherish the culinary skills they passed on to me. Over the years, I developed my own healthier cooking style, honoring their techniques while avoiding sugar, flour, processed foods, oil, butter, dairy, meat, fat, and unhealthy carbs.

This Bitchin Baked Cauliflower recipe is a perfect example. It contains a blend of commonly used dried spices (thanks, Grama!) and embodies the delicious, healthy, and fresh approach I've adopted. There is no meat, dairy, sugar, flour, or oil in this dish, but it's pure comfort food. Originally called Vegan Baked Cauliflower, it became "Bitchin Baked Cauliflower (with No-Dairy Cheese Sauce)" because it turned out so good!

This scrumptious vegan dish is a crowd-pleaser, perfect for holiday potlucks or sharing with friends and loved ones. Its rich, smoky flavor will satisfy all taste buds, vegan or not, and the hearty cauliflower blend ensures it's super satisfying. No need for added salt; Braggs Aminos provides the perfect amount of sodium. Be prepared—everyone will be asking for the recipe!

### Ingredients

#### Baked Shrooms:

16 oz mushrooms, sliced (separated), I use 8 oz each Baby Bell & Cremini  
1 tsp smoked paprika, I like to use ½ tsp each of smoked sweet and smoked spicy paprika  
2 TB Braggs Aminos

#### Cauliflower Blend:

1 head cauliflower, cut into florets  
1-3/4 cup vegetable broth, separated  
½ yellow onion, diced  
½ red onion, diced  
½ cup yellow bell pepper, diced  
½ cup red bell pepper, diced

3 cloves garlic, finely minced  
1 TB Braggs Aminos

Cheese Sauce:

1-1/2 cups raw cashews	1 tsp oregano
2 TB raisins	1 tsp parsley
1 TB sweet smoked Paprika	3 TB nutritional yeast
1 tsp onion powder	1 TB Red wine
1 tsp garlic, garlic	1 remaining cup vegetable broth
1 tsp thyme	

**Procedure**

Baked Shrooms:

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F.
2. Wash the mushrooms and slice them about ¼" thick (or buy them pre-sliced). Put them in a small mixing bowl and add the paprika and Braggs aminos. Toss the mushrooms lightly with a spoon (so as to mix things up but not break the mushrooms into pieces)
3. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Spread the mushroom mixture in a single layer and bake the mushroom about 20 minutes (we're going for slightly crispy mushrooms but not burnt). The length of time they need to cook will depend on how thick you slice them. Mine were sliced slightly thick, so 20 minutes was good. After they come out of the oven, set them aside.

Cauliflower Mixture:

4. While the mushrooms are baking, cut and wash the cauliflower and steam it on the stove till it's soft but not mushy. I steamed a pretty good size head of cauliflower 10 minutes. Set the florets aside when done steaming.
5. In a large skillet add ¼ cup of the vegetable broth and sauté the onions, pepper and garlic about 10 minutes (till everything gets a little limp).

Cheese Sauce:

6. Add the cashews, raisins, spices, nutritional yeast and remaining vegetable broth to your Cuisinart mixer with the S blade. \*See cooks note1. Pulse the ingredients about 10 times to get things mixed up a bit, then turn the mixer on and mix it 1-2 minutes. It should be smooth and a little thick like a milk shake but not runny like milk. If you need to, you can play with the thickness by adding more nutritional yeast or cashews to thicken it, or more vegetable broth (or water) to thin it out.

Assemble Everything and Bake:

7. In a large mixing bowl dump the steamed cauliflower and baked shrooms and mix it up. Add about ½ cup of the cheese sauce and gently mix it up well. Then add another ½ cup of the cheese cause and lightly blend it. \*\*See cooks note2. Then put it in a casserole dish or Dutch oven and cook it in your 400 degree oven COVERED for 30 minutes. \*\*\*See cooks note3
8. Let cool about 10 minutes, add pepper to taste and serve!

\*cooks note1: You can make this sauce in any kind of food processor or blender. I've used both but find that the like ease of using the Cuisinart is less work for me.

\*\*cooks note2: The recipe makes 2 cups of cheese sauce. I like having the extra sauce available as it's delicious with just about any steamed vegetable and will keep in the refrigerator for a several days (in an airtight jar or plastic storage container). I like it with broccoli or asparagus, but it's good on Brussels sprouts or as a healthy dip for your artichoke! And if you want a good pasta sauce but don't want the carbs, it's also a great sauce served over Zoodles (zucchini noodles). Or, you can freeze it to use for future

use. You may need to add more vegetable broth to thin it a bit as the cashews seem to absorb the moisture before it totally freezes.

\*\*\*cooks note3: If your casserole dish doesn't have a lid, use aluminum foil.

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