

# Vegan Cheesecakes for All Seasons

From Pauline Edward's Kitchen



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## Introduction

### BEFORE WE START

As many of you know, I love to experiment in the kitchen. It's my R&D lab. A couple of years ago, I set out in search of a cheesecake recipe that was affordable and relatively easy to make. Since I have difficulty digesting dairy products, I searched for vegan recipes. Many of them called for expensive ingredients such as organic vegan cream cheese or cashews. I wanted a cheesecake that was high in protein and affordable, and, of course, tasty. I experimented with many combinations of ingredients, from cashews to tempeh to tofu, until I developed a basic recipe that can be adapted according to taste, flavours, and seasonal ingredients. I've tried to keep the instructions as simple as possible, using ingredients that are easy to obtain in local grocery stores and, at the same time, also affordable.

I would like to thank my testers Ghislaine, Mathieu and Francis. Your feedback is always much appreciated, or maybe it's the smiles. And thank you, Mike, for proofreading, and testing, of course.

### INGREDIENTS

**Tofu** The firm Unisoya organic tofu, which can be found at most grocery and health food stores, works very well in these recipes. One 454 g (16 oz) block makes two recipes. Slice the block in half and freeze the other half for another recipe.

**Soy-free** For a soy-free version, replace the tofu with 1¼ cup raw cashews, and the soymilk with a non-soy milk or water. Note that if the milk is sweetened, you may need to reduce the sugar in the recipe.

**Soymilk** is a good choice for its higher protein count, but these recipes will work just as well with other non-dairy milks such as almond or oat. Coconut milk is great with certain fruits, especially mango and pineapple or chocolate. Yum!

**Tapioca Flour**, also known as tapioca starch, is derived from the starch found in the cassava plant. It is used in many vegan cheese recipes as a thickener. It is available in health food stores as well as online.

**Lactic Acid Powder** gives it a bit of a sour/cheesy taste. Optional ingredient.

**Agar Agar**, a powder derived from seaweed, is the gelling ingredient used in these recipes. It is also available as flakes, but you will need to use three times the amount. The powder is available in most oriental grocery stores in small 25 gram packets. NOW brand is available in health food stores and online in 57 gram (2 ounce) containers.

**Sugar** I use organic cane sugar. The amount of sugar used in these recipes is adjustable, and so it is listed as a range, from ½ to ¾ cup. I prefer less sweet, while my testers like the sweeter versions.

**Jam** Feel free to experiment with your favourite jams in these recipes. Taste them first for sweetness; you may need to reduce the amount of sugar in the recipe.

**Fruit Compote** I personally prefer making fruit compote from scratch rather than using jams since I can then control the sweetness. I usually have cranberry sauce in the freezer, which makes one of my favourite cheesecakes. 2 cups of frozen fruit such as mangoes, strawberries or raspberries is more than enough for one recipe, including a topping if desired.

## PREPARATION

These recipes may appear complicated at first glance, but they are really simple and surprisingly quick. The best approach is to have all your ingredients and tools ready. Once you get going, it takes about 15 minutes.

### *Step One*

Prepare a base for your cake. You will find variations on a basic oatmeal and date base, which can be modified according to the cake recipe. The base can be prepared a day or more in advance. It could probably be frozen, which is something I would do if I had space in my freezer. Note that the base can be used without baking. Baking firms it up a bit, making it easier to serve.

### *Step Two*

Prepare the fruit compote if this is an ingredient in your recipe. Again, this can be prepared a day or more in advance. If you do prepare the compote ahead of time and refrigerate it, you will need to warm it up slightly before incorporating it in the cake because the cake gels very quickly as it cools. Compotes can also be frozen in 1½ cup portions for later use. Note that the fruit can also be used raw, without cooking, while cooking a few minutes brings out the flavour. If using raw fruit, you can add a bit of water or fruit juice when you crush it. Canned pineapple is great too. For blueberries, I simply allow 2 cups of frozen blueberries to thaw, then use as is, including the “blue” water, no cooking.

For Soy-free version, soak cashews in hot water 15 minutes if not using a high-powered blender like Vitamix, for example, or soak overnight in the fridge.

### *Step Three*

Cook the agar in the water until fully dissolved. This is important. While the agar is cooking, prepare the filling, blending until smooth. I use a large non-stick wok with lid as it makes it easier to stir. Add blended mixture to fully dissolved agar. The mixture may have lumps at first from the tapioca flour, but as you stir with the spatula, they will disappear. When thick, shiny, bubbly and smooth, add the jam or compote, if using. Stir until completely mixed into the filling for an even look, or simply swirl for a nice marbled look.

### *Step Four*

Immediately pour filling over the base. It firms up very quickly, so scrape away with your spatula, smooth out the top and, you're done. While still hot, sprinkle any topping if using. Allow to cool then refrigerate several hours or overnight. Note that these cakes freeze very well.

Let me know how these recipes work for you.

Enjoy,  
Pauline

## Basic Fruit Cheesecake

### INGREDIENTS

3 teaspoons agar powder

1 cup water

8 ounces firm tofu (or 1¼ cup raw cashews)

1¼ cups soymilk (or non-soy milk)

2 teaspoons vanilla extract

4 tablespoons vegan butter

1 teaspoon sea salt

⅔–¾ cup cane sugar

4 tablespoons tapioca flour

1½ cups jam or fruit compote

Optional topping: sprinkle with dried coconut, or extra jam or compote.

### PREPARATION

1. Prepare basic crumb base.
2. Place agar and water in 2-quart saucepan. Cover with lid; set heat to medium low. Cook several minutes, stirring frequently until fully dissolved.
3. While agar is cooking, place tofu, soymilk, vanilla, butter, sugar, tapioca flour and salt in blender jar; blend until smooth.
4. Pour blended mixture into dissolved agar. Stir and cook until thick, bubbly and shiny.
5. Stir in jam or fruit compote. (Mix well for uniform look, or partially for marbled look.)
6. Quickly pour filling over base.
7. Sprinkle with coconut, nuts or fruit.
8. Cool and refrigerate several hours.

### *Fruit Compote*

2–2½ cups fresh or frozen fruit (mango, pineapple, strawberries, raspberries)

1–2 tablespoons sugar, to taste

¼ cup water or fruit juice

Place fruit, water and sugar in saucepan. Cook on low until softened. Break up large chunks with immersion blender or in blender, if needed.

## Cheesecake Base Variations

### INGREDIENTS

#### *Basic Base*

1¼ cups oats or mix of oats and nuts  
1 cup chopped dates (or dates and raisins\*)  
4 tablespoons vegan butter\*\*  
½ teaspoon vanilla

#### *Chocolate Base*

1¼ cups oats or mix of oats and nuts  
1 cup chopped dates (or dates and raisins\*)  
2 tablespoons cocoa powder  
4 tablespoons vegan butter  
½ teaspoon vanilla

#### *Mochaccino Base*

1¼ cups oats or mix of oats and nuts  
1 cup chopped dates (or dates and raisins\*)  
1 tablespoon cocoa powder  
1 teaspoon instant coffee  
4 tablespoons vegan butter  
½ teaspoon vanilla

#### *Matcha Base*

1¼ cups oats or mix of oats and nuts  
1 cup chopped dates (or dates and raisins\*)  
1 teaspoon matcha powder  
4 tablespoons vegan butter

\*Use part raisins for a less sweet base.

\*\*Use less if adding oily nuts such as walnuts or pecans

### PREPARATION

1. Preheat oven to 350°F\*\*
2. Line bottom of 8 inch springform pan with parchment paper.
3. Grind oats and nuts in food processor.
4. Add remaining ingredients. Process until well mixed.
5. Press into bottom of pan.
6. Bake for 10–12 minutes.

*Basic base*



*Chocolate base*



*Matcha base*



## Tropical Pineapple Delight

### INGREDIENTS

3 teaspoons agar powder

1 cup water

8 ounces firm tofu

1¼ cups soymilk or pineapple juice (including juice from canned pineapple)

2 teaspoons vanilla

1 teaspoon sea salt

½ cup organic cane sugar

4 tablespoons tapioca flour

4 tablespoons vegan butter

1 tsp lactic acid powder (or 1 tablespoon lemon juice or ½ teaspoon citric acid) (optional)

1 398 ml (14 oz) can crushed pineapple (in pineapple juice)

*Topping: Dried coconut, pineapple slices (optional)*

### PREPARATION

1. Prepare basic crumb base.
2. Drain pineapple juice from can into measuring cup. Add enough pineapple juice to make 1 cup.
3. Place agar and water in 2-quart saucepan. Cover with lid; set heat to medium low. Cook several minutes, stirring occasionally until fully dissolved.
4. While agar is cooking, place tofu, juice, salt, sugar, butter and tapioca flour in blender jar; blend until smooth.
5. Pour blended mixture into dissolved agar. Stir and continue to cook until thick, bubbly and shiny.
6. Stir in crushed pineapple.
7. Quickly pour filling over base.
8. Decorate with pineapple slices and coconut.
9. Cool in refrigerator several hours.



## Matcha Cheesecake

### INGREDIENTS

3 teaspoons agar powder

1 cup water

8 ounces firm tofu

1¼ cups soymilk (or coconut milk)

2 teaspoons vanilla extract

4 tablespoons vegan butter

¾ cup cane sugar

1 teaspoon sea salt

4 tablespoons tapioca flour

2 tablespoons matcha powder

½ cup dried coconut (optional)

*Topping: Dried coconut or other ground nuts.*

*Great with pistachios!*

### PREPARATION

1. Prepare base. (Matcha base)
2. Place agar and water in 2-quart saucepan. Cover with lid; set heat to medium low. Cook several minutes, stirring occasionally until fully dissolved.
3. While agar is cooking, place tofu, soymilk, vanilla, sugar, salt, matcha powder, coconut and tapioca flour in blender jar. Blend until smooth.
4. Pour blended mixture into dissolved agar. Stir and continue to cook until thick, bubbly and shiny.
5. Quickly pour filling over base.
6. Sprinkle with dried coconut or other ground nuts.
7. Cool and refrigerate several hours.





## Matcha Cheesecake (Soy-free)

### INGREDIENTS

3 teaspoons agar powder  
1 cup water  
1¼ cups raw cashews, rinsed  
1¼ cups water  
2 teaspoons vanilla extract  
4 tablespoons vegan butter  
1 teaspoon sea salt  
¾ cup cane sugar

4 tablespoons tapioca flour  
2 tablespoons matcha powder  
½ cup dried coconut (optional)

Topping: Dried coconut or other ground nuts

### PREPARATION

1. Prepare base. (Matcha oat base)
2. Place agar and water in 2-quart saucepan. Cover with lid; set heat to medium low. Cook several minutes, stirring occasionally until fully dissolved.
3. While agar is cooking, place tofu, soymilk, vanilla, sugar, salt, matcha powder, coconut and tapioca flour in blender jar. Blend until smooth.
4. Pour blended mixture into dissolved agar. Stir and continue to cook until thick and shiny.
5. Quickly pour filling over base.
6. Sprinkle with dried coconut.
7. Allow to cool in refrigerator several hours or overnight.



## Long Winter Blues Cake

### INGREDIENTS

3 teaspoons agar powder  
1 cup water  
8 ounces firm tofu  
1¼ cups soymilk  
2 teaspoons vanilla extract  
4 tablespoons vegan butter  
1 teaspoon sea salt  
⅔-¾ cup cane sugar

4 tablespoons tapioca flour

2½ cups frozen blueberries, thawed (or 2 cups fresh) (Use raw, or cook with 1 tablespoon tapioca flour and 1 tablespoon sugar for compote, for a thicker, sweeter jam-like texture.) (About 1½ cups blueberry compote)

### PREPARATION

1. Prepare basic base.
2. Place agar and water in 2-quart saucepan. Cover with lid; set heat to medium low. Cook several minutes, stirring occasionally until fully dissolved.
3. While agar is cooking, place tofu, soymilk, vanilla, butter, sugar, tapioca flour and salt in blender jar; blend until smooth.
4. Pour blended mixture into dissolved agar. Stir and continue to cook until thick, bubbly and shiny.
5. Stir in blueberries. (Mix well, or partially for marbled look.)
6. Quickly pour filling over base.
7. Cool and refrigerate several hours.



## *Cranberry Cheesecake (Cashew)*

### INGREDIENTS

3 teaspoons agar powder

1 cup water

1¼ cups raw cashews

1¼ cup water

2 teaspoons vanilla extract

4 tablespoons vegan butter

1 teaspoon sea salt

½ cup cane sugar

4 tablespoons tapioca flour

1½ cups cranberry sauce

2 teaspoons lactic acid powder (optional)

### PREPARATION

1. Prepare basic crumb base.
2. Place agar and water in saucepan. Cover with lid; set heat to medium low. Cook several minutes, stirring frequently until fully dissolved.
3. Rinse cashews; drain.
4. While agar is cooking, place cashews, water, vanilla, butter, sugar, tapioca flour and salt (and lactic acid powder, if using) in blender jar; blend until smooth.
5. Pour blended mixture into dissolved agar. Stir and continue to cook until thick, bubbly and shiny.
6. Swirl in cranberry sauce.
7. Quickly pour filling over base.
8. Cool in refrigerator several hours.



## Cranberry Cheesecake

### INGREDIENTS

3 teaspoons agar powder

1 cup water

8 ounces firm tofu

1¼ cups soymilk

2 teaspoons vanilla extract

4 tablespoons vegan butter

1 teaspoon sea salt

⅔-¾ cup cane sugar

4 tablespoons tapioca flour

1½ cups cranberry sauce/compote

### PREPARATION

1. Prepare basic crumb base.
2. Place agar and water in saucepan. Cover with lid; set heat to medium low. Cook several minutes, stirring frequently until fully dissolved.
3. While agar is cooking, place tofu, soymilk, vanilla, butter, sugar, tapioca flour and salt in blender jar; blend until smooth.
4. Pour blended mixture into dissolved agar. Stir and continue to cook until thick, bubbly and shiny.
5. Swirl in cranberry sauce.
6. Quickly pour filling over base.
7. Cool in refrigerator several hours.



## Mango Cheesecake

### INGREDIENTS

3 teaspoons agar powder

1 cup water

8 ounces firm tofu

1¼ cups soymilk or coconut milk\*

2 teaspoons vanilla

⅔-¾ cup cane sugar

1 teaspoon sea salt

4 tablespoons tapioca flour

2 cups frozen mango chunks, thawed, plus 2 tablespoons water or mango juice, as needed for blending (1½ cups mango compote)

Topping: Dried coconut or other nuts (Optional)

\*Delicious with mango juice instead of milk.

### PREPARATION

1. Prepare basic base.
2. Crush mango chunks with water or mango juice in blender or food processor.
3. Place agar and water in 2-quart saucepan. Cover with lid; set heat to medium low. Cook several minutes, stirring occasionally until fully dissolved.
4. While agar is cooking, place tofu, milk (or juice), vanilla, sugar, tapioca flour and salt in blender jar; blend until smooth.
5. Pour blended mixture into dissolved agar. Stir and continue to cook until thick, bubbly and shiny.
6. Stir in crushed mangos or compote.
7. Pour filling over base.
8. Decorate with coconut or other nuts.
9. Cool and refrigerate several hours.



## Chocolate Fudge Cake

### INGREDIENTS

2 teaspoons agar powder

1 cup water

8 ounces firm tofu

1¼ cups soymilk (or coconut milk)

2 teaspoons vanilla extract

1 teaspoon sea salt

¾–1 cup cane sugar

4 tablespoons vegan butter

4 tablespoons tapioca flour

4 tablespoons cocoa powder

*Topping: Chopped nuts (walnuts, almonds, pecans), coconut*

### PREPARATION

1. Prepare chocolate base.
2. Place agar and water in 2-quart saucepan. Cover with lid; set heat to medium low. Cook several minutes, stirring occasionally until fully dissolved.
3. While agar is cooking, place tofu, soymilk, vanilla, salt, sugar, tapioca flour and cocoa powder in blender jar; blend until smooth.
4. Pour blended mixture into dissolved agar. Stir and continue to cook until thick, bubbly and shiny.
5. Quickly pour filling over base.
6. Sprinkle with coconut or chopped nuts.
7. Cool and refrigerate several hours.



## Mochaccino Mousse Cake

### INGREDIENTS

2 teaspoons agar powder  
1 cup water  
8 ounces firm tofu  
1 cup soymilk (or coconut milk)  
¼ cup hot water  
2 teaspoons vanilla extract  
1 teaspoon sea salt

¾–1 cup cane sugar  
4 tablespoons vegan butter  
4 tablespoons tapioca flour  
4 tablespoons cocoa powder  
1 tablespoon instant coffee

*Topping: Chopped nuts (walnuts, almonds, pecans) or coconut*

### PREPARATION

1. Prepare mochaccino base.
2. Place agar and water in 2-quart saucepan. Cover with lid; set heat to medium low. Cook several minutes, stirring occasionally until fully dissolved.
3. Dissolve instant coffee in hot water.
4. While agar is cooking, place tofu, soymilk, vanilla, salt, sugar, tapioca flour, cocoa powder and hot coffee in blender jar; blend until smooth.
5. Pour blended mixture into dissolved agar. Stir and continue to cook until thick, bubbly and shiny.
6. Quickly pour filling over base.
7. Sprinkle with coconut or chopped nuts.
8. Cool and refrigerate several hours.



## Maple Tofu Cheesecake

### INGREDIENTS

2 teaspoons agar powder  
1 cup water  
8 ounces tofu  
½ cup soymilk  
1 cup maple syrup  
4 tablespoons butter

2 teaspoons vanilla  
1 teaspoon sea salt  
4 tablespoons tapioca flour

Optional topping: Chopped walnuts, almonds  
or pecans

### PREPARATION

1. Prepare crumb base.
2. Place agar and water in 2-quart saucepan. Cover with lid; set heat to medium low. Cook several minutes, stirring occasionally until fully dissolved.
3. While agar is cooking, place tofu, maple syrup, soymilk, butter, salt and tapioca flour in blender jar; blend until smooth.
4. Pour blended mixture into dissolved agar. Stir and continue to cook until thick and shiny.
5. Quickly pour filling over base.
6. Stir in maple caramel sauce (if using)
7. Sprinkle with nuts, if using.
8. Cool in refrigerator several hours.





## Maple Cashew Mousse Cake

### INGREDIENTS

2 teaspoons agar powder  
1 cup water  
1¼ cup raw cashews  
1 cup maple syrup  
⅓ cup water  
4 tablespoons butter

2 teaspoons vanilla  
1 teaspoon sea salt  
4 tablespoons tapioca flour  
Optional topping: Chopped walnuts,  
almonds, or pecans

### PREPARATION

1. Prepare crumb base.
2. Place agar and water in 2-quart saucepan. Cover with lid; set heat to medium low. Cook several minutes, stirring occasionally until fully dissolved.
3. While agar is cooking, place cashews, maple syrup, soymilk salt, butter and tapioca flour in blender jar; blend until smooth.
4. Pour blended mixture into dissolved agar. Stir and continue to cook until thick and shiny.
5. Quickly pour filling over base.
6. Sprinkle with nuts, if using.
7. Cool in refrigerator several hours.



## Chocolate Peanut Butter Fudge Cake

### INGREDIENTS

2 teaspoons agar powder  
1 cup water  
8 ounces firm tofu  
1¼ cups soymilk  
2 teaspoons vanilla extract  
1 teaspoon sea salt  
¾ cup cane sugar

4 tablespoons vegan butter  
4 tablespoons tapioca flour  
4 tablespoons cocoa powder  
¾ cup smooth peanut butter

*Topping: Chopped nuts (walnuts, almonds, pecans), coconut*

### PREPARATION

1. Prepare chocolate crumb base.
2. Place agar and water in 2-quart saucepan. Cover with lid; set heat to medium low. Cook several minutes, stirring occasionally until fully dissolved.
3. While agar is cooking, place tofu, soymilk, vanilla, salt, sugar, tapioca flour and cocoa powder in blender jar; blend until smooth.
4. Pour blended mixture into dissolved agar. Stir and continue to cook until thick, bubbly and shiny.
5. Stir in peanut butter. Leave swirls or stir completely.
6. Quickly pour filling over base.
7. Sprinkle with chopped nuts.
8. Allow to cool in refrigerator several hours or overnight.



## Chocolate Swirl Cake

### INGREDIENTS

$\frac{2}{3}$  cup dark chocolate chips

2 tablespoons coconut oil

2 teaspoons agar powder

1 cup water

8 ounces firm tofu

$1\frac{1}{4}$  cups soymilk (or part coconut milk)

2 teaspoons vanilla extract

1 teaspoon sea salt

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup cane sugar

4 tablespoons tapioca flour

### PREPARATION

1. Prepare chocolate base.
2. Melt chocolate chips and coconut oil in microwave in 15 second intervals. Stop to stir.
3. Place agar and water in 2-quart saucepan. Cover with lid; set heat to medium low. Cook several minutes, stirring occasionally until fully dissolved.
4. While agar is cooking, place remaining ingredients in blender jar; blend until smooth.
5. Pour blended mixture into dissolved agar. Stir and continue to cook until thick, bubbly and shiny.
6. Pour filling over base.
7. Swirl melted chocolate chips into hot filling.
8. Cool and refrigerate several hours.

