



Makes 1½ cups
Preparation Time: 15 minutes
Cook Time: 7 hours

INGREDIENTS:

¾ cup whole raw almonds (see [time-saving tip](#), recipe intro)

1 garlic clove, peeled

¼ cup unsweetened almond milk

1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice

½ teaspoon salt

Almond Crema (Crema de Almendras)

This sauce continues to surprise me every time I make it. It is amazing that a bunch of almonds can make such a creamy and versatile sauce. In Mexico, this is known as a nogada sauce (a sauce made from nuts). Cooks have employed it since the sixteenth century to make dishes like chiles en nogada. Although you may have used cashew crema before, I prefer almonds because they are not as sweet and thus complement the flavors of Mexican cuisine better. You will have to soak the almonds overnight and then peel them, but I promise the extra time this takes is worth it. (See time-saving tip, below.) I use this crema many times in [my cookbook](#), [COMIDA CASERA](#), but it truly shines in the [Creamy Poblano and Corn Tacos](#).

This recipe is excerpted from [COMIDA CASERA: More Than 100 Vegan Recipes, from Traditional to Modern Mexican Dishes](#) by Dora Ramírez.

Tips

Time-saver: Use ¾ cup blanched slivered almonds instead (no need to soak or peel them) and blend for an extra 2 minutes. If you don't have a high-powered blender, pass the crema through a fine mesh sieve.

Cashew variation: For a cashew crema, use 1 cup cashews, soaked overnight in hot water.

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By Dora Ramírez

- 1 Place the almonds in a heatproof container and pour in enough boiling water to cover them by 2 inches. Let them soak overnight at room temperature. Drain the almonds. To peel them, place each almond between your thumb and forefinger and press slightly. The skin should pop right off.
- 2 Transfer the peeled almonds to a blender, add the garlic, ½ cup water, the almond milk, lemon juice, and salt and blend for about 2 minutes, stopping halfway through to scrape down the sides of the blender. It will start out looking grainy and may be too thin, but as you blend it will become smooth and thicken up. If it is too thick, add an additional ¼ to ½ cup water. It should be the consistency of a heavy cream. Keep in mind that it will thicken as it chills in the fridge.
- 3 If the sauce is not as smooth as you would like, you can pass it through a fine-mesh sieve. Use immediately or store in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 2 days.