

# Cheesy Pasta Lunchbox

Rating: ★★★★★



## BLACK BEAN & DATE BROWNIES

Dietary: VEG, DF, GF, NF

Allergens: Egg

Age group: 8 months+

Mealtime: Snack

Difficulty level: Beginner

## CAULIFLOWER MAC 'N' CHEESE CUPCAKES

Dietary: VEG, EF, NF

Allergens: Wheat, Soy, Dairy

Age group: 8 months+

Mealtime: Lunch

Difficulty level: Medium

# CAULIFLOWER MAC 'N' CHEESE CUPCAKES

**Serves:** 8

**Prep:** 20 mins

**Cook:** 30 mins



**Vegetarian**



**Egg Free**



**Nut Free**

## Equipment

High-speed food processor or  
stick blender

## Ingredients

- 240g wholegrain penne
- ½ head of cauliflower (400g), rinsed and broken into florets
- 2 tbs (40ml) extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tbs (10g) organic cornflour or arrowroot
- 1 ½ cups (375ml) milk of choice
- 500g silken tofu, crumbled
- 1 ½ cups (150g) grated cheddar cheese
- 1 tbs (16g) chia seeds

### Topping:

¾ cup (90g) grated cheddar cheese

## Method

1. Cook the pasta until al dente. Drain and set aside.
2. Place cauliflower in a food processor and process until it reaches a rice-like consistency.
3. Heat oil in a large frying pan and sauté cauliflower on medium heat for about 5 mins.
4. Sprinkle cornflour on top and sauté for another minute.
5. Add milk, and cook for 2-3 mins or until the sauce thickens.
6. Add tofu, cheese and chia seeds, cool slightly, pour sauce into a blender. Blend until smooth and creamy.
7. Place the pasta into mini muffin cases and pour the cauliflower sauce over it. Mix gently until everything is evenly coated with the sauce. Sprinkle with additional grated cheese (optional) and grill in the oven for 5-10mins or until the top is golden.

**Mandy's serving suggestion:** Serve immediately with a garden salad or steamed vegetables.

**Storing leftovers:** Store in the fridge for up to 4 days or freeze for up to 4 months.

## Tips

- ✓ **Allergies:** For a dairy-free version: Swap cow's milk for coconut, soy, or oat milk and leave out cheese or swap for nutritional yeast. For a gluten-free version: Swap wholegrain penne for brown rice penne.
- ✓ **Easy ingredient swaps:** Swap cornflour for wholemeal spelt flour or wholemeal flour. Swap cauliflower for broccoli to turn the dish into a "Hulk" Mac'n' Cheese.
- ✓ **Additional boosters:** Boost this recipe by adding grated vegetables of choice such as zucchini, white sweet potato or parsnip to the sauce. Add 1-2 tbs of organic shiro miso paste to the cauliflower sauce to boost digestion and gut health.
- ✓ **Baby-friendly version:** Serve mashed or cut into finger food-sized pieces.
- ✓ **For fussy eaters:** Place mixture into mini muffin holders, top with grated cheese and bake for approximately 15 mins to create mini mac 'n' cheese muffins.

# BLACK BEAN & DATE BROWNIES

Serves: 16

Prep: 10 mins

Cook: 20 -25 mins



Vegetarian



Dairy Free



Gluten Free



Nut Free

## Equipment

High-speed food processor or  
stick blender

## Ingredients

- 400g canned black beans, rinsed and drained
- 7 Medjool dates (120g), pitted
- 3 eggs
- ¼ cup (60ml) coconut oil, melted
- 1/3 cup (30g) cacao powder
- 2 tsp (10ml) vanilla extract
- 1 tsp (4g) baking powder

## Method

1. Preheat oven to 180°C and line a 20cm square cake tin with baking paper.
2. Place beans, dates and eggs into a high-speed food processor and process until smooth, scraping down the sides once or twice to help blend evenly.
3. Add the rest of the ingredients and process until well combined and smooth.
4. Pour the mixture into the prepared baking dish.
5. Place in oven and bake for 20-25 mins or until a cake tester or knife comes out clean.
6. Allow to cool before cutting into little squares.

**Mandy's serving suggestion:** Always combine a sweet snack in a lunchbox with vegetables. If serving as a dessert, serve with whipped coconut cream or yoghurt and fresh berries.

**Storing leftovers:** Store in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 10 days or freeze for up to 4 months.

## Tips

- ✓ **Allergies:** For an egg-free version: Swap eggs for 1-2 ripe bananas (200g peeled).
- ✓ **Easy ingredient swaps:** Swap black beans for adzuki beans or kidney beans.
- ✓ **Additional boosters:** Add 1 tbs of chia seeds to the batter. Sprinkle unbaked batter with crushed seeds.
- ✓ **Baby-friendly version:** Serve mashed or in finger food-sized pieces.
- ✓ **For fussy eaters:** Make sure the beans are processed very smoothly.