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## Product Review: SoyaJoy Automatic Soymilk Maker

by Vickilynn Haycraft

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Why make non-dairy milk at home? Our family discovered the need for non-dairy alternatives to milk when our eldest son was diagnosed with a milk allergy as a baby almost 20 years ago. We scrambled to find substitutes for milk, butter, cheeses, etc. The choices back then were limited, not very palatable, and very expensive. However, this was all we had and we made due.

Nowadays, people are choosing non-dairy beverages such as soymilk, rice milk, oat milk and almond milk for health and taste reasons. With more information coming to light about the health benefits of including a moderate amount of soy in the diet, soymilk has become one of the best sellers for non-dairy beverages. Currently there are several good versions to choose from (enriched, vanilla, chocolate, etc.), and many good brands on the market. Unfortunately, using a non-dairy milk alternative regularly can still be very expensive. We use milk alternatives not only for drinking, but also on cereal and in all cooking and baking where milk is used. The cost of buying these products took a large bite out of our food budget each month.

In the Haycraft home, we purchased our non-dairy "milks" by the case to get the bulk price, and we sometimes we were able to order from wholesalers to get the wholesale price. When we were unable to get either of those options due to our locality, or when we ran out and needed some right away, we had to buy from the grocery store and pay the retail price. On average, one quart of non-dairy "milk" costs anywhere from \$2.30 to \$3.75 depending on brand and type. In a month's time, we used on average approximately \$30 to \$50 in these beverages. Over a year, we estimate that we spent \$480 to \$600 on non-dairy beverages.

As with most things we use regularly, I tried to save money by making dairy alternatives at home. I did produce a beverage from each of these foods, but in the case of soy, the process was multi-stepped, time-consuming and very messy. Although I found the milk to be useable, my family would not touch it. In other

**Babies**

attempts using different combinations, I could not get a product that was comparable in taste and texture to the store-bought. That is, until I reviewed two automatic soymilk makers.

**Children****Christmas**

I finally have been able to make a good-tasting milk alternative that my family enjoys without complaint. Making these beverages at home has saved us about \$500 per year. The automatic soymilk maker paid for itself in about three months, and the best news is that the process of making non-dairy milk using a machine is easy, quick and completely automatic (thus saving my precious time for more important tasks!). I am completely sold on using these machines on a daily basis.

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I reviewed and compared two popular brands of soymilk makers: The SoyaJoy and the SoyToy. Between these two machines, I prefer the SoyaJoy Soymilk Maker. You can read the comparison on my website: <http://www.realfoodliving.com>.

**SoyaJoy Automatic Soymilk Maker**

Manufacturer: Sanlinx Inc.

800 watts

Weight: 4 pounds 14 ounces

Height: 14 inches including top handle

Canister (inner and outer): Stainless steel. Plastic handle on the outside.

Filter basket: Stainless steel mesh

Machine head outer: Plastic with electronic controls and feeding window and top handle.

Machine head components in contact with the liquid: Stainless steel

Yield: 6 cups liquid

Using the SoyaJoy Automatic Soymilk Maker has truly been a liberating experience! The process is simple and fast and works well every time. Also, the joy of saving about \$500 per year has me celebrating. The best news is that my family will drink the beverages made in the SoyaJoy.

**To use the SoyaJoy:**

This machine uses only soaked beans. While some may see this as a drawback, I found the soaking of beans to be a simple addition to my nighttime routine. It takes less than five minutes to do and only uses one cup of space. I believe that using soaked beans is a healthier option than using them dry. In addition, using soaked beans has eliminated the uncomfortable intestinal discomfort that I experienced by using dried soybeans for soy beverage. I soak a few batches of beans and grains, rinse them, and store them in a covered container in the refrigerator. This allows me to use my SoyaJoy in a moment's notice. I usually use the previously soaked beans and grains within one week.

For one SoyaJoy batch, I rinse 100 grams (1/2 cup plus 1 Tablespoon) of Laura® soybeans (\* see note) and then cover beans with water to soak overnight. In the morning, I drain and rinse the beans and place them in the SoyaJoy filter basket

and attach the basket to the machine head. I then add water to the correct level designated on the canister, place the machine head on the canister, plug the machine in and press the "Start" button. (You can also feed the soaked beans through the feeding window once the water is added and machine assembled.) The SoyaJoy heats the water and during the cycle grinds the beans several times. In about 16 minutes, I have hot, steaming soy "milk" (or other "milks"). There is no need to strain this beverage since the SoyaJoy has an extremely fine-weave mesh filter, and the okara (fiber remainders from the bean) is left behind in the filter basket. I save the okara because it is very nutritious (it is part of the whole bean once the liquid has been extracted) and it works well in my recipes such as bread and meatloaf. I even use it in cakes and brownies.

When the SoyaJoy cycle is complete and the machine beeps, I pour the hot liquid into a half-gallon glass canning jar. If we are not drinking it warm (sometimes we have hot chocolate soymilk), I will place it in the fridge to cool and flavor later, or keep plain for my cooking. My family favorite "milk" is Soy/Barley. I use this unflavored in my cooking and baking. We also add natural sweetener, cocoa, vanilla and a pinch of salt for a chocolate milk that is outstanding. This can be enjoyed hot or cold. For a thicker beverage, I add a pinch of a natural thickener (guar gum) when mixing in the flavoring. I also enjoy using other nuts and grain combinations.

\* Note: I use Laura® beans, which are a non-GMO soy bean. You can use any soy bean in the SoyaJoy, but different varieties have some taste differences. I prefer to use non-GMO and/or organic beans for safety and the Laura® bean has a mild taste that is perfect for making soy "milk".

The SoyaJoy canister is a heavy gauge stainless steel that has proven to hold up well over years of use. The SoyaJoy canister is constructed from one piece of steel. There are no welding seams or edges. No places to leak or wear down over time. No welding material to come in contact with food. In addition, there is no outer layer over the steel so there is no space where soymilk can pool. These are very important features to me.

The SoyaJoy manufacturers have developed a cleanser that easily (by soaking overnight) eliminates any residue in the filter. This keeps the soymilk maker working at its peak performance and keeps the soymilk well strained. I use this cleanser with good results, but it is optional. According to the manufacturers, the cleanser is non-toxic and food safe used as directed.

#### **Advantages:**

- ⚡ Materials that come in contact with the beverages are quality stainless steel.
- ⚡ Filter basket mesh is fine-weaved and effectively filters the fibers from the liquid, eliminating the need for additional straining. (a BIG plus for me!)
- ⚡ Steel canister has pouring spout and has a rolled top, making pouring less messy.
- ⚡ The steel canister's one-piece construction prevents the soymilk from dripping in between the layer of plastic and steel. (a BIG plus for me!)

- ⚡ Control pad is programmable for custom cycles and more options for machine.
- ⚡ Feeding window is an option for adding beans/grains.
- ⚡ Cycle length is fast at approximately 16 minutes.
- ⚡ The SoyaJoy has been on the market since 1998 and is the one most-tested in actual use.

**Disadvantages:**

- ⚡ Machine only uses soaked beans (I personally do not view this as a disadvantage since I only use soaked beans and I believe it is the healthier option. I included this for those who prefer using dried beans).
- ⚡ The machine head and the filter basket do not stand up. They must be propped up after being removed from the machine. I lay mine in a large stainless bowl.
- ⚡ The steel outer surface of the machine gets hot to the touch during operation.

**SoyaJoy Soy/Barley Milk**

Measure 100 grams (1/2 cup plus 1 Tablespoon) Laura® beans (or your favorite soybeans). Remove 1 Tablespoon soybeans. Add 1 Tablespoon hulled barley.

Rinse beans and barley and cover with clean water. Soak 6-16 hours. (I soak overnight). When soaked, drain and rinse again.

Place in SoyaJoy and process as usual. Use as is, or flavor as desired. Yield: 6 cups

SoyaJoy  
Sanlinx Inc.  
4755 Fowler Drive  
Morristown, TN 37814

<http://www.soyajoy.com>

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Vickilynn Haycraft is a wife, mother of 5, homeschooling parent, writer, columnist and reviewer. To subscribe to Vickilynn's free weekly newsletter on better health, "Real Food Living" go to:  
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