

PERSIAN EGGPLANT DIPS

MIRZA QASEMI

- 3 large eggplant
- vegetable or olive oil, for frying
- 1 bulb garlic, cloves peeled and thinly sliced
- ½ tsp turmeric
- 3 large ripe tomatoes, quartered
- 2 tbsp tomato paste
- 1½ tsp crushed sea salt

- 2 large free-range eggs, beaten
- small handful of broken walnut pieces, to garnish
- Persian flatbread, to serve



The most authentic way to prepare the aubergines is to blister them whole over an open flame (either on a barbecue or over a domestic gas hob) until blackened and the flesh has softened right through to the centre. Alternatively, to bake them, preheat the oven to 220C/425F/Gas 7. Place the aubergines in a roasting tin and roast them whole in the oven 40-45 minutes.

Meanwhile put a good drizzle of oil in a large frying pan over a medium heat and slowly cook the garlic slices, ensuring you cook them through rather than simply browning them. If they start to go brown too quickly, take the pan off the heat and allow the residual heat to cook them through, if necessary. Once the garlic begins to brown around the edges, stir in the turmeric. Add the tomatoes to the pan and cook for about 15-20 minutes, or until they break down and are cooked through, then turn off the heat and set the pan aside.

Once the aubergines are cooked, score the aubergine skin from stalk to base and scoop out the flesh using a large spoon. Stir this into the garlic and tomatoes. Place the pan over a medium-high heat and cook through for a few minutes, mashing a little as you go. Lastly, add the tomato purée, sugar and sea salt, stir well and cook for a further 6-8 minutes, stirring occasionally to prevent the mixture from browning.

Make lots of little holes in the aubergine mixture and pour the beaten eggs straight into the pan, but do not stir in the egg. You want to ensure the eggs are cooking and solidifying before you incorporate them, they take about 5-6 minutes to become opaque. Once cooked, give the mixture one final stir and remove the pan from the heat. Leave the mixture to cool for 20 minutes, as this dish is best served warm rather than piping hot. Garnish with walnut pieces and serve with flatbread.

Recipe from: https://www.bbc.co.uk/food/recipes/smoked_aubergines_with_49362

KASHK O BADEMJAN

- 3 medium Chinese or Italian eggplants, peeled
- 4 TBSP vegetable oil
- 1 large garlic clove, minced
- ½ cup water
- ⅓-½ tsp kosher salt
- ⅛ tsp freshly cracked pepper
- 1/16 tsp cayenne pepper powder
- ⅓ cup walnuts
- 1 large yellow onion, peeled and diced medium
- 3 TBSP vegetable oil
- 2 tsp crushed dried mint leaves
- ¾ cup kashk
- A few fresh mint leaves add a nice touch as garnish (optional)



Cut the peeled eggplants in half or quarters lengthwise.

Heat 4 TBSP vegetable oil in a medium nonstick skillet over medium high. Arrange the eggplants in a single layer in the skillet. Cover the skillet and fry the eggplants for about 7 minutes, or until golden brown on one side. Flip over the eggplants, cover again and fry the other side for another 5-7 minutes, or until the eggplants can easily be poked with a fork. Don't leave the eggplants unattended. The high heat will burn them very quickly.

Meanwhile in another skillet heat 3 TBSP oil over medium heat and fry the diced onion until golden brown.

Try this easy method for mincing the garlic: With the food processor running, drop the garlic through the feed chute and process for a few seconds, or until uniformly minced.

Add the minced garlic, water, kosher salt, cayenne pepper powder, and freshly cracked black pepper to the skillet with the fried eggplants. Cover and cook over low heat for about 15 minutes, or until the eggplants are very tender and all the water is cooked off. Turn the heat off and mash the eggplants with a fork or a potato masher to small pieces.

In the same food processor add ⅓ cup walnuts and process until very fine, about 1 minute. Do not over process, walnuts are soft and tend to turn to a paste very quickly.

Once the fried onions are golden brown remove the skillet from the heat and add 2 tsp crushed dried mint leaves. Stir to combine and set aside. Reserve 3 TBSP fried onion and mint mixture for garnish.

Add the rest of the onion mixture along with the processed walnuts to the mashed eggplants. Give it a good stir to blend well.

Stir in ¾ cup kashk to the eggplant mixture until uniformly blended.

Transfer the eggplant mixture to the serving bowl. Sprinkle the top with the reserved fried onion and mint mixture. Add optional fresh mint leaves for garnish

Serve warm or at room temperature with toasted flat bread or French Baguettes.

Recipe from: <https://persianmama.com/eggplant-and-walnut-dip-kashke-bedemjan/>

HALIM BADEMJAN

- 3 Large Eggplants
- 1 lb (453g) Beef Neck
- 2 Cups Rice
- 1/2 lb (226g) Kashk (Whey)
- 3 Onions
- Turmeric, Salt, Black pepper powder, Crushed Mint
- Persian spice mix (Advieh)
- 7 Tbsp Vegetable Oil
- 2 Garlic Cloves



Prep:

- Slice 2 onions
- Peel and slice the eggplants
- Smash the garlic cloves
- Boil 4-5 cups water

1. Cut a large onion in four pieces and put them in a pot, put the beef in the pot.
2. Add Persian spice mix (Advieh) and black pepper powder, pour in boiling water until it covers the beef.
3. Simmer the pot for 90 minutes over medium heat.
4. Fry the eggplants in 2 tbsp vegetable oil and salt (as preferred). Flip eggplants over so both sides become brown.
5. Fry the sliced onions in frying pan with 5 tbsp vegetable oil.
6. Put 2 cups of rice in a pot, add 5 cups of boiling water, simmer until tender and all the water's evaporated.
7. Remove/spare 3/4 of the fried onions from the frying pan, add turmeric and Persian spice mix (Advieh) and fry for 5 more minutes.
8. Remove the onions. Add the smashed garlic and crushed mint to the pan and fry for a minutes.
9. Add the fried eggplants and the beef to the rice, stir and mash thoroughly.
10. Add the fried garlic/mint (step 9) and fried onions (step 8), blend completely.
11. Add boiling water and the kashk to a pot, simmer for 10 minutes over low heat, then add it to the eggplant/rice pot, mix well. Cook for 15 minutes.
12. Decorate with the spared fried onions (step 7) and fried mint.

Recipe from: <https://www.aashpazi.com/halimbademjan>