

Middle Eastern Mezze

Edgeh

6 bunches parsley
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 tbsp mint
2 tsp baking powder
2 1/2 dozen eggs
Salt, pepper
Oil

Thoroughly clean parsley. Separate stems from leaves.

Mix garlic, mint, baking powder, eggs, salt and pepper.

Spray olive oil on hot pan. Add 2 tbsp of mixture and then quickly add some parsley. Cook until lightly browned. Then flip over and cook other side until golden brown.

Place cooked mini omelets on serving platter. Continue with remaining mixture. Serve in pita. Refrigerate leftovers.

Baba Ganoush

1 large eggplant
1/4 cup tahini, plus more as needed
3 garlic cloves, minced
1/4 cup fresh lemon juice, plus more as needed
1 pinch ground cumin, optional
salt, to taste
1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
1 tablespoon chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
1/4 cup brine-cured black olives, such as kalamata

Preheat an oven to 375°F.

(Prick the eggplant with a fork in several places and place on the grill rack 4 to 5 inches from the fire. Grill, turning frequently, until the skin blackens and blisters and the flesh just begins to feel soft, 10 to 15 minutes. Transfer the eggplant to a baking sheet and bake until very soft, 15 to 20 minutes). Optional bake about 45 minutes.

Remove from the oven, drain liquid, let cool slightly, and peel off and discard the skin.

Mix tahini, garlic, lemon juice and the cumin. Then puree with eggplant flesh. Season with salt, then taste and add more tahini and/or lemon juice, if needed.

Transfer the mixture to a serving bowl and spread with the back of a spoon to form a shallow well. Drizzle the olive oil over the top and sprinkle with the parsley. Place the olives around the sides.

Serve at room temperature with pita.

Hummus

1 (15 oz) can (425 grams) chickpeas
1/4 cup lemon juice (1 large lemon)
1/4 cup tahini (Krinos)
1/2 garlic clove, minced
2 tablespoons (30 ml) olive oil, plus more for serving
1/2 to 1 teaspoon salt (to taste)
1/2 teaspoon (2 grams) cumin
2-3 tablespoons (28 – 42 ml) water
1 tablespoon minced parsley

In the bowl of a food processor, combine tahini and lemon juice. Turn on then set a timer for 1 minute. After one minute, scrape sides and bottom of bowl then turn on and set a timer for 30 seconds. This extra time helps “whip” or “cream” the tahini, which makes sure you will have the smoothest and creamiest hummus possible

Next, add two tablespoons of the olive oil, garlic, cumin and salt then turn food processor on and set a timer for 30 seconds.

Open the can of chickpeas, drain then rinse well. Scrape sides of bowl then add 1/2 of the chickpeas. Turn processor on and set a timer for 1 minute. Scrape sides of bowl then add the rest of the chickpeas. Set a timer for 1 more minute.

By now, the hummus should be smooth and creamy, if there are still some bits of chickpea or it seems too thick, turn the processor on and let run while you add two to three tablespoons of water until completely smooth.

Transfer hummus to a bowl then top with 1 tablespoon of olive oil and sprinkle parsley on top. Serve with pita chips, vegetables or warm pita wedges.

Labneh

Labneh is strained yogurt and has a cheeselike consistency. It is popular for breakfast or used as an appetizer in the Middle East.

Ingredients:

- 3 cups plain yogurt preferably Greek style yogurt
- 1 teaspoon salt

Preparation:

In a medium bowl, combine yogurt and salt.

Place mixture in the middle of a large cheesecloth. Bring the sides of the cheesecloth together, making a pouch. Tie the "pouch" with string or twist tie.

Hang in the refrigerator for 12-24 hours with a bowl underneath to catch the whey. You can tie the pouch to a rack in the refrigerator and place a bowl on the shelf below to catch.

Lebni Spread

1 container of lebni or labneh

Dried mint

Stir labneh and place in serving container. Sprinkle with freshly crushed dried mint. Spread on pita.

Turkish Cacik (similar to Greek Tzatziki)

Labneh

Cucumber, sliced and seeded

Garlic, minced

Mint

Salt

Mix all ingredients together. Refrigerate until ready to serve.