

Muhamarra dip

- 4 large red peppers, roasted and peeled
- 5 cloves garlic, roughly chopped
- 1 mild red chilli, deseeded and chopped
- 150g walnuts, toasted, roughly chopped, plus 50g for garnish
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons pomegranate molasses
- 4 tablespoons olive oil

Steps:

1. Put all the ingredients except the lemon juice, pomegranate molasses, olive oil in a food processor and blend until very smooth.
2. Add the lemon juice and pomegranate molasses, blend further then slowly stream in the olive oil.
3. To serve: Spread thick layer over a flat plate, making a dip in the middle. Fill the dip with the remaining olive oil, sprinkle with chopped walnuts

Labneh and orange marinated raisins

- 750g thick Greek yoghurt
- 1/2 cup raisins
- 100ml orange juice, or just enough to cover the raisins

Steps:

1. To make the labneh: Place the Greek yoghurt in a cheese cloth, tie it with a string to compact it into a rough ball, and let it hang in your fridge above a container to catch the excess liquid. Leave it anywhere between 2-5 days. The longer you leave it, the thicker it will turn out.
2. When ready, transfer to a container and store in the fridge up to 7 days. Mix with a spoon to loosen slightly before using.
3. To make the marinated raisins: Mix the raisins and orange juice in a bowl

and let it sit in the fridge for minimum 24 hours, and up to 48 hours.

4. To serve: Swoosh the labneh onto a plate and garnish the raisins with a bit of the juice all around. Finish with some nice olive oil and black pepper.

Beetroot tzatziki

The key to a great tzatziki is stripping the cucumber of all its moisture so it remains crunchy and fresh. We love the earthy sweetness that beetroot brings to this classic Greek dish.

200 g fresh beetroot (baby ones, if you can get them), trimmed
Small piece of cucumber, grated
1 t salt
200 g natural Greek yoghurt
1 garlic clove, finely chopped
1 T lemon juice

Steps::

1. Preheat oven to 180C
2. Wrap each beetroot bulb in foil. Place on a baking tray and bake for 45-50 minutes until tender. Once cooled, grate the beetroot. (you can use a food processor to save your hands getting pink!)
3. Meanwhile, place the cucumber and salt in a colander and allow to drain for 10 minutes. Squeeze to remove excess liquid and place in a bowl.
4. Add remaining ingredients, stir to combine, and taste. Season as necessary with salt.
5. Store in the refrigerator no longer than 24 hours.

Note: if your beetroot has leaves attached, don't throw them away! They are super tasty and good for your kidneys. Make a salad or sautee them with olive oil.

To serve:

Spoon onto a nice serving dish, to be eaten cold or at room temp

Hummus two ways

First way (classic):

250g dried chickpeas, soaked overnight in water + 1 tsp of baking soda
1 tbsp salt, plus more for seasoning
270g tahina
60ml lemon juice
2 garlic cloves 100ml iced
water

Steps:

1. Add your soaked chickpeas and 1 tbsp of salt into a pot and cover with water. Cook for about 30-40 minutes, making sure to skim the foam that appears on top, until the chickpeas are completely tender- you should be able to squish the chickpeas easily with no extra pressure.
2. Drain the chickpeas if using immediately, if not, keep it in the liquid to stay warm.
3. In a food processor, add the garlic, lemon juice and chickpeas (they should be warm!). Blitz it up until a relatively smooth paste is formed, depending on your food processor, anywhere between 3-5 minutes.
4. Now add the tahina and 1 tsp of salt and process until it's mixed in, then slowly drizzle in the water, you may not need all of it. Start with half the water and check the consistency before adding more.

To serve:

Spoon the hummus into a serving plate, adding a swoosh here and there
Garnish with good olive oil.

Second way (fattet humus)

250g dried chickpeas, soaked overnight in water + 1 tsp of baking soda
1 tbsp salt, plus more for seasoning
270g tahina
60ml lemon juice
2 garlic cloves
150g Greek yoghurt
100g warm chickpea liquid
3 pitas, torn into 2-3cm pieces and baked until golden

90ml olive oil
10g parsley leaves, finely chopped 10g
coriander leaves, finely chopped 2 lemons,
zest and juice both
1/2 tsp sumac 1/4 tsp
paprika

Steps:

1. Follow classic humus recipe but keep the chickpeas in the warm liquid
2. To make pita chips: preheat oven to 180C. Mix pita pieces with 2 tbsp olive oil, pinch of salt, 1/2 tsp cumin, lay on a baking tray and bake for 10-20 minutes or until pita is golden and crispy.
3. To make the hummus: Place half the chickpeas, approximately 200g, in the food processor with the garlic and blitz until smooth paste. Add the yoghurt, Tahina, lemon juice, 1/2 tsp salt and blitz up. Add the warm liquid, half at first to check consistency.
4. To make the garnish: mix the chopped parsley, coriander, lemon zest, olive oil, and a small pinch of salt in a small bowl.

To serve:

In your serving dish, we'll begin layering. Start with half the hummus, then two thirds of the chickpeas, 3 tbsp of the cooking liquid, hummus, pita, then finally chickpeas. Garnish with the herb oil and dust with sumac and paprika.

Warm butter bean salad

3 cans butter bean, drained and washed
1/2 cup good olive oil, start with 1/2 cup check if you need more
2 cloves garlic, crushed or sliced thinly
1 bay leaf
1 zest of lemon, peeled into stripes
1/2 tsp chilli flakes (Aleppo chilli would be nice!)
A couple sprigs of thyme
1-2 tsp salt

Steps:

1. Add all the ingredients except for the beans into a medium

saucepan and let it warm up over gentle heat.

2. Once the oil is fragrant, about 5-10 minutes, add the beans and let it sit and marinate for about 10 minutes before turning off the heat and letting it sit to continue marinating.
3. Transfer into a serving bowl
4. To serve: Transfer into a pretty serving dish. Garnish with lemon zest and extra chilli flakes to top. If there are fresh herbs available (mint, parsley, dill, etc), feel free to garnish with it as well.

Salad-e Shirazi

Named for the city in southwestern Iran, salad-e Shirazi is found on practically every Iranian table at practically every meal. It should be bright, crunchy and tart, a nice counterpoint to rich, buttery rice and unctuous stews. Toss the cucumbers, onion, herbs and tomatoes with the lime vinaigrette just before serving to preserve their crunch. In Iran, dining companions usually fight over the leftover juice at the end of a meal.

Ingredients

- 3 to 4 Persian cucumbers or one telegraph
- Green onions or red onion
- 2 tablespoons any combination of finely chopped fresh parsley, coriander, basil or dill and mint
- Chopped ripe tomatoes
- ¼ cup verjuice or lime juice
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- Fine sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

Steps:

1. Remove alternating stripes of peel on cucumbers and trim ends. Dice cucumbers into 1/4-inch pieces and place in a large bowl.
2. Chop the onion into slices. Chop the fresh herbs. Chop tomatoes into bite-sized pieces. Add to bowl.
3. In a small bowl, make a vinaigrette by whisking together 1/4 cup verjuice/lime juice, oil, 3/4 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper. Just before serving, dress vegetables with vinaigrette and stir to combine. Taste and adjust seasoning with salt and lime/verjuice as needed. Serve at room temperature or lightly chilled.

Batata harra

- 10 medium potatoes
- 6 tbsp olive oil
- 5 garlic cloves, minced 3 tsp coriander seeds
- 2 tsp chilli flakes
- 3 tsp coriander seeds
- 4 tsp turmeric powder
- 2 limes or lemons, juice and zest** - save roughly 2 tsp for the garnish
- 2 cups fresh coriander (with stems)**, roughly chopped
- 1 cup parsley (with stems)**, roughly chopped
- 1 cup mint**, roughly chopped
- 1 cup dill (with stems)**, roughly chopped
- salt to taste
- 2 tbsp olive oil**, for garnish

Steps:

1. Place the **potatoes** in a large pot with well salted cold water. Boil and cook for anywhere between 10-20 minutes until fully cooked through but still al dente.
2. Meanwhile, prepare all your **herbs** and mix them in a large bowl. Make sure not to bruise the herbs.
3. Drain and cool the potatoes and then chop them into bite-sized pieces. Add half the herbs and toss to coat
4. This next step might have to be done in two batches. In a cast-iron skillet or similar, add the **ghee, garlic, chilli flakes**, and **coriander seeds**. Cook until fragrant, about 2 minutes.
5. Add the **turmeric powder** and the **juice and zest of the limes**. Add the potatoes and leave it to develop a crust. Stir as little as possible. It's done when the potatoes are coated in all the aromatics and it has crispy bits around it.
6. In the bowl of herbs, add the **olive oil** and the remaining **2tsp lime juice** and gently toss to coat.

To serve:

transfer the potatoes into a several small/medium dishes garnish with the herb oil

Za'atar eggs

6 Eggs
1.5 tbsp lemon juice
3 tbsp olive oil
1 tbsp za'atar
1 pinch chilli powder
1 tsp sesame seeds
salt and black pepper

Steps:

1. Boil the eggs for 6.5 minutes then plunge into ice cold water to stop the cooking.
2. Break the eggs in half using your hands so you get nice scraggly and uneven pieces. Break them horizontally and vertically to create variety. Place on your serving plate.
3. In a small bowl, whisk the lemon juice, olive oil, za'atar, sesame seeds, and a pinch of salt. Drizzle it all over the eggs.
4. Finish with a sprinkling of chilli powder, garnishing salt, and black pepper

Ta'ameia

300g fava beans, peeled (soaked overnight)
1.5 cups of fresh coriander and parsley
¼ white onion, roughly chopped
4 garlic cloves, medium
1 tsp coriander
1 tsp salt
oil for deep frying
5tbsp coriander seeds, for garnish
2 ½ tbsp sesame seeds, for garnish

Steps:

1. Soak the fava beans overnight then drain very well. You want as little of the water to go into the final mixture.
2. In a food processor, add the fresh herbs, onion, garlic, coriander seeds,

and salt. Blitz until almost a smooth paste (think of a wet sandy mixture).

3. Add the fava beans and pulse until kind of a sandy texture, but larger grains. Add the "garnishing" sesame and coriander seeds and pulse until mixed through. Place bean mix in the fridge until ready to use.

4. Pre-heat your oil to 175C.

5. Form the taameia into even balls by using the special taameia tool or slightly damp hands. Place them in a tray with baking paper or cook immediately.

6. Cook the taameia in batches for about 2-4 minutes or until golden brown all around. Place onto paper towel to absorb excess oil.

Koshari

300g lentils, soaked overnight, boiled until al dente, and drained

4tbsp butter or olive oil

100 g basmati or short grain rice

2 tsp cumin seeds

2 coriander powder 300g rice

1/2 tsp Sumac powder

1/2 tsp Cinnamon powder

1 tsp salt

Steps:

1. In a pot, add the butter or fat of choice. Once melted, add the cumin and coriander and let toast for a minute.
2. Add the rice and fry for about 5 minutes, making sure it is well coated in the fat and spices.
3. Now add the cinnamon, sumac, and salt and stir until well combined.
4. Cover with just enough water and leave to cook like any regular rice, about 20-25 minutes.
5. Once fully cooked, let it sit in the pot, off heat for another 15 minutes, then gently fluff with a fork or chopsticks.
6. Gently stir in the lentils, making sure not to overmix as rice can get really starchy and start to break down, making the mixture wet.
7. Transfer to a serving dish, garnish with a sprinkle of sumac and/or fresh herbs and condiments (see below)

Condiments for koshari:

For the tomato sauce:

- 1 1/2 teaspoon garlic crushed.
- 2 Tablespoon olive oil.
- 1/4 cup white vinegar.*
- 2 cans 16oz tomato sauce (I am not keen on tomato sauce so I only put a 1/2 cup in mine, then also added some stewed garden tomato)
- Salt to taste.

For the fried onion:

- 3 Large onions sliced.
- Oil for frying.

Make tomato sauce:

1. In a medium sauce pan, sauté garlic in oil until fragrant, about 1 minute.
2. Add vinegar, tomato sauce, water and salt then mix well.

Fried onions:

1. In a deep pot, add oil to cover the bottom by 1 inch.
2. Add onion slices and cook on medium-high stirring every now and then making sure not to burn the onions. Some people coat the onion with flour first.
3. Take onions out on a plate lined with kitchen paper towel.
4. Set aside, it will harden and get crispier.

Rose and Pistachio Om Ali

For the custard:

270g sugar
4 eggs
2 yolks
1 tsp baking powder
400g milk
400g cream (35%)
1 tsp vanilla
1 tsp rosewater

Steps:

1. Whisk the sugar, eggs, yolks and baking powder in a bowl until the colour changes to a pale yellow and the mixture is airy.
2. Whisk in the remaining ingredients. Set aside.

For the dough:

450g phyllo
150g butter, melted
1tbsp brown sugar
tbsp icing sugar + 1tbsp cinnamon, mixed together
handful of pistachios, chopped

Steps:

1. Preheat the oven to 200C. Coat the baking dish with some butter. This next part will be demonstrated.
2. Brush 1 phyllo sheet with butter and place it at the bottom of your dish. Repeat this step 4-5 times until the bottom & sides of the dish are covered.
3. With the remaining sheets, one at a time, drizzle it with butter, fold it loosely like a fan, and place it on the dish. Repeat until you've used up all the sheets.
4. Bake for approximately 20 minutes or until evenly golden. When done, turn the temperature down to 180C and take the phyllo out.
5. Ladle the custard filling all over the phyllo and top it with brown sugar. Let it sit for 5 minutes before baking it again for another 20-25 minutes or until the custard is set. Let it cool for about 10 minutes.
6. Dust with cinnamon + icing sugar and top with nuts and/or rose petals