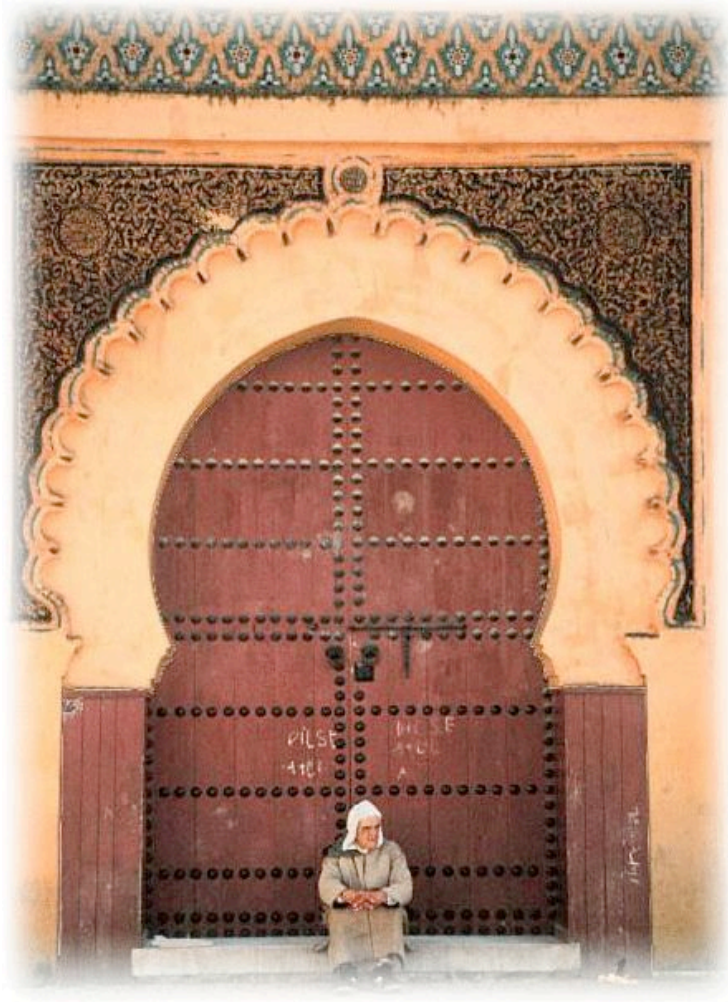


Vegetarian Levant Cuisine



Easy Middle Eastern Vegetarian Recipes

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Easy Middle Eastern Dips

Serve with garlic pita crisps (see below)



Avocado with Tahini

2 medium avocados
4 tablespoons lemon juice
3 tablespoons tahini
1/4 cup finely chopped parsley
2 tablespoons olive oil 1 clove garlic crushed
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper
Pinch cayenne

Blend lemon juice and tahini till smooth. Pit and peel the avocados and cut into pieces, then add them with the remaining ingredients to the lemon juice/tahini mixture and blend into a smooth paste. Place in shallow dish and sprinkle with paprika.

Lentil and Potato Dip

3 cups cooked brown lentils
2 peeled, chopped boiled potatoes
2 tablespoons flour
6 crushed garlic cloves
1/4 cup chopped coriander
1/4 cup lemon juice
dashes of salt and pepper

Fry garlic, then coriander with a tablespoon olive oil until slightly tender. Mix flour with a little water to the lentil/potato mixture and add the garlic mixture. Cook 15 minutes on medium heat. Before serving add lemon juice. Serve hot or cold with pita bread as an appetizer.

Moroccan Bean Dip with Cumin

2 cups cooked red kidney beans
3 cloves garlic
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon dried chili flakes
1/4 teaspoon ground cumin
1/2 cup flat-leaf parsley, chopped
1/4 cup lemon juice

Mash the moist beans with the salt, chili flakes, cumin, parsley and lemon juice. Add a little water if you want the mixture smoother. Let stand for 30 minutes to allow the flavors to blend. Serve in a flat dish and sprinkle on a little olive oil and cayenne.

Baba Ghanoug (Aubergine Dip)

1 large round aubergine (eggplant)
3 cloves of garlic
4 tablespoons tahini
4 tablespoons lemon juice
salt and red pepper
olive oil

Cook the aubergine in a hot oven or on a fork over the flame of a gas stove. When it is well cooked through and the skin is blackened, douse with cold water, peel and chop into small pieces. Mash two or three cloves of garlic to a paste with some salt. Add aubergine, mash to a smooth consistency and blend the tahini and lemon juice. Serve in a bowl with olive oil on top and a dusting of red pepper.

Hommus (Chickpea dip)

2 cups cooked chickpeas
juice of 2 lemons
3 tablespoons tahini
2 garlic cloves
salt
1 tablespoon olive oil
1/2 teaspoon paprika

Process the chickpeas in a blender (or food processor) with the lemon juice, tahina, garlic, salt and a little water to obtain a soft creamy consistency. Serve on a flat plate, garnished with a dribble of olive oil, a dusting of paprika.

Turkish Yogurt and Walnut Dip

2 cups plain yogurt (thicker is better)
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 tablespoon fresh chopped mint leaves
1/4 cup finely chopped walnuts
1/8 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon pepper
dash chilli powder

Stir minced garlic, chopped walnuts, mint leaves, chilli powder, salt and pepper into yoghurt and let mixture stand 15 minutes. Serve dip with pita chips and fresh vegetable sticks.

Low fat Garlic Pita Crisps

6 whole-wheat pitas
Olive oil cooking spray
Granulated garlic

Preheat oven to medium heat. Cut pitas into eighths and place on sprayed pan. Spray top side of pitas and sprinkle with garlic. Bake 10 minutes or until lightly browned.



Middle Eastern Salads *Refreshing and colourful*



****Note: These salads remain fresh and crisp for days if you add the dressing just before serving!***

Chickpea, Tomato and Olive Salad

2 cups cooked chickpeas
1/2 cup black olives, chopped
1/4 cup scallions, finely chopped
2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh coriander leaves
2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh parsley
3 large tomatoes, chopped
1 cup of shredded lettuce

1 clove garlic, crushed salt to taste
1/2 teaspoon paprika
1/8 teaspoon chili powder
1 tablespoon olive oil
2 tablespoons lemon juice

Mix all ingredients and serve immediately.

Arabic Fattoush Salad with Fetta

2 cups finely chopped tomatoes
2 cups finely chopped cucumbers
2 cups finely chopped onion
1/2 cup finely chopped parsley
3/4 cup chopped fresh mint
1/2 cup cubed fetta cheese

6 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
1/4 cup olive oil
1/2 teaspoon each salt and pepper

1 cup toasted pita pieces (or see Garlic crisps)

Combine the ingredients together except for fetta and mix well.
Add fetta on top of salad.

*Can make beforehand, keep dressing and pitta pieces separate to keep the pita crispy and add just before serving.

Fasouleh Green Bean Salad

2 cups green runner beans, fresh (cut into pieces)
2 onions, chopped
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 red chili, seeded and chopped
1/4 cup water
1/2 teaspoon salt
juice of 2 lemons

Steam beans until crispy-tender. Drain. Saute the onions in the olive oil until softened and transparent. Add the green beans and the chili, stirring to mix well. Saute for 2 minutes. Stir in the water and the salt and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat, cover, and steam for about 7 minutes, until the beans are tender. Uncover and raise the heat to evaporate as much of the water as possible. Drain. Toss with the lemon juice.

Lebanese Potato Salad

4 medium potatoes, rinsed
1/2 cup parsley, finely chopped
1/3 cup mint, finely chopped
1/3 cup chopped green onions
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon black pepper
dash of paprika
1/2 cup sour cream
2 tablespoons olive oil
4 tablespoons apple cider vinegar

Boil whole potatoes until they are tender, for about 30 minutes in water. Lift them out of the water and set them aside to cool. Peel, dice and put them into a bowl. Add chopped greens, seasoning, sour cream, olive oil and vinegar, and mix well. Taste and adjust seasoning. Serve warm or chilled.

Classic Tabouleh

3 cups of finely chopped flat leaf parsley
1/2 cup of finely chopped mint
4 or 5 finely chopped spring onions (with the green parts)
4 tomatoes medium size chopped into small cubes
100g of fine burghul
1/2 cup lemon juice
4 tbs olive oil
Salt and Pepper

Soak the burghul in cold water for 1/2 an hour then drain. Mix all the ingredients together, taste and adjust seasoning if needed. Serve with lettuce leaves .

Note: When using fresh vegetables and herbs, make sure they are washed thoroughly and drained.

Ayran (Yogurt Drink)

1 cup yoghurt
1/2 cup cold water
Salt to taste

Mix yoghurt with the water and salt in an electric blender, or beat well together using a wooden spoon. Serve well chilled.

Middle Eastern Vegetarian Main Dishes

Combine a grain & pulse/bean dish for complete protein

Persian Rice Pilaf with Mushrooms

2 cups white rice
2 cups vegetable stock
1 cup mushrooms, chopped
2 tablespoons blanched almonds, halved or slivered
4 tablespoons clarified butter
1 tablespoon olive oil
2 tablespoons pine nuts
1 onion, chopped
1 clove garlic, minced
Salt and black pepper
2 tablespoons fresh dill, chopped
1/4 cup butter or olive oil



Cook the rice in 2 cups of vegetable stock with 2 tablespoons clarified butter, simmer until all water is absorbed and rice grains separate. In another pan, saute the almonds in the olive oil, stirring frequently. When the almonds are beginning to brown, stir in the pine nuts and continue to cook until all the nuts are golden. Remove with a slotted spoon. In a large nonstick pan, heat the 2 tablespoons butter. Fry onions and add mushrooms till browned. Stir all into the rice and add the fresh dill, keep cooking for another 5 minutes.

Chickpea stew

2 cups chickpeas soaked overnight
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 onions, sliced
1 can whole tomatoes
2 teaspoons ground turmeric
1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/4 cup chopped cilantro (coriander)
1/4 cup chopped parsley
8 threads saffron, lightly toasted
6 cups vegetable broth
1 teaspoon salt
Freshly ground pepper

Heat oil in large soup pot over medium-high heat. Fry onions until golden. Meanwhile, blend tomatoes, turmeric, ginger, cinnamon, cilantro, parsley and saffron in blender. Add to onions, cover and bring to boil over high heat. Lower heat to simmer. After 15 minutes, add chickpeas and lower heat to medium and cover tightly. Cook 1 hour. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Tunisian Stuffed Tomatoes

6 medium-large, firm, ripe tomatoes
4 tablespoons olive oil
1 onion, finely chopped
1/2 cup raisins
1/2 cup pine nuts
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
2 cups cooked rice
Salt and pepper to taste



Cut a slice from the top of each tomato. Finely chop tops of tomato. Scoop out tomatoes and turn upside down on paper towels to drain. Heat 2 Tbs. oil in large skillet over medium-high heat. Add onion and cook until soft, about 3 minutes; stir frequently. Add chopped tomato tops, raisins, pine nuts, and cinnamon and mix well. Reduce heat to simmer for about 2 minutes. Remove from heat, and add cooked rice and salt and pepper to taste; mix gently until well blended. Preheat oven to 350 F. Fill tomatoes with mixture and set side-by-side in baking pan. Dab remaining oil on tomatoes so they are well greased. Bake in oven until tender but still firm (about 25 minutes).

Lebanese Cauliflower with Tahini

1 small head of cauliflower, broken into florets
2 to 3 garlic cloves, chopped
1/2 cup tahini
1/2 to 1 teaspoon ground cumin
Juice of 1 lemon
Salt and pepper, to taste
Dash cayenne pepper
A few tablespoons of water, as needed
Paprika and chopped parsley to garnish
Lemon wedges

Cook the cauliflower by steaming or boiling until just tender; do not overcook. Drain and set aside. Mix the garlic with the tahini, cumin and lemon juice. Season with salt, pepper and hot pepper sauce. At this point the mixture is a dense thick paste. Add a little water, tablespoon by tablespoon, until the mixture is creamy, then mix with the cauliflower. Cover and refrigerate until ready to serve. At serving time, garnish with a sprinkle of paprika, chopped parsley/cilantro and/or lemon wedges.



Couscous

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 tablespoon butter
1 tablespoon minced garlic
3 cups couscous (the quick kind)
3 cups vegetable stock, heated
1/4 cup chopped fresh mint
Salt and freshly ground white pepper

In a large saucepan or a wok, heat the olive oil and butter. Sweat the garlic for 2 or 3 minutes. Add the couscous and coat well. Pour in the stock and cook for 2 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in the mint and mix thoroughly. Season with salt and pepper to taste and keep warm.

Arabian Noodle Rice

2 cups long grain rice (rinsed and drained)
2 cups boiled water
1/4 cup Vermicile noodles, very thin, in small pieces
2 tablespoons butter
1/8 teaspoon salt

Fry vermicile noodles with butter till slightly brown. Add boiling water and salt. Stir till boiling. Add rice slowly. Let it boil before covering. Stir. Put a thin layer of tin under the pan to prevent burning. Reduce heat to low and leave to cook for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally.