



S A V O U R

Egyptian Feast

with Chef AJ Takla

“Bel hana wel shefa”

– with happiness and good health (bon appetit)

Layered Fattat Humus with pita

Tahina sauce

Roast Beetroot dip with spices

Labne three ways

Carrots with dukkah

Salata baladi

Ta’ameia

Hard boiled eggs with za’atar

Koshari Lentils

Batata Harra potatoes

Pistachio and rosewater Om ali



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



FATTET HUMMUS

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:

- 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. Drain the chickpeas if using immediately, if not, keep it in the liquid to stay warm.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.



Tahina

Ingredients:

- ½ cup Tahina
- Lemon juice
- Olive oil
- Garlic clove, grated
- Spices of choice (I like cumin, turmeric, coriander)
- Salt and black pepper

Steps:

There are no real steps. The key to making good tahina is understanding how it thickens & loosens up as liquid is added to it. Place tahina in a bowl & slowly whisk your liquid ingredients until you get the right consistency and flavor.

Koshari

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

3 tbsp butter or olive oil

2 tsp cumin seeds

2 coriander powder

300g rice

1/2 tsp Sumac powder

1/2 tsp Cinnamon powder

1 tsp salt

2 spring onions, chopped

onions, sliced and fried till
golden and crispy

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 wellcoated 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 rich can get really starchy and start to break down, making the mixture wet.
7. To serve: transfer to a serving dish, garnish with a sprinkle of sumac and/or fresh herbs

Ta'ameia

300g fava beans, peeled (soaked overnight)

1.5 cups of fresh coriander and parsley

¼ white onion, roughly chopped

1 garlic cloves, medium

1 tsp coriander

1 tsp salt

oil for deep frying

6 tbsp coriander seeds, for garnish

2.5 tbsp sesame seeds, for garnish

Steps:

1. Soak the fava beans overnight then drain very well. You want a 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 fava beans 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.

To serve:

Place taameia in a serving dish



Salata Baladi

Salata Baladi is the most commonly served Egyptian salad. Traditional recipes typically feature tomatoes, cucumbers, red onions, sweet bell pepper, parsley, lemon and Middle Eastern spices.

The expression “al-baladi” is a short and useful expression, translating to “of the country,” or “of my village” in Egyptian. At local restaurants you will find chicken al-baladi and bread al-baladi for example, emphasizing the regional authenticity of their recipes.

You’ll find a version of this salad all over the Middle East. To the Israelis, it is Israeli salad or *yerakot salat*. To the Syrians, the Palestinian Arabs and the Lebanese, it is *salatet banadoura*.

Ingredients

- 1 cucumber finely diced
- 1/2 red onion, thinly sliced or diced
- 1 cup flat leaf parsley finely chopped
- 1 capsicum, finely diced
- 4 tomatoes, finely diced
- Garden greens (this isn’t traditional but our garden has a lot atm!)
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 4-8 T Lemon juice and apple cider vinegar
- 1/8 tsp Ground cumin
- 1/2 tsp White Sugar

Instructions

1. In a large mixing bowl add cucumber, red onion, parsley, bell pepper and tomato.
2. In small bowl, add olive oil, lemon juice and zest, cumin, and white sugar. You’ll need to taste the dressing for flavour balance and maybe add a bit more acid.
3. Toss Salata Baladi until vegetables and vinaigrette are fully combined.
4. Season with salt, to taste.



Za'atar eggs

7 eggs

1 1/2 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



Egyptian BEETROOT DIP

This quick, easy and vibrant Egyptian beetroot dip is healthy and looks beautiful on the table, which makes it perfect to serve at holidays and parties. Serve it with crackers for a crunchy, creamy combination or with pita.

Ingredients

- 4 Beetroots medium sized
- 5 Garlic Cloves
- 1 cup Greek Yoghurt
- ¼ cup Lemon Juice
- 2 tablespoons Olive Oil Extra Virgin
- ½ teaspoon ground Cumin
- ½ teaspoon ground Coriander Powder
- ½ teaspoon ground Cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon Paprika
- ¾ teaspoon Salt
- ⅛ teaspoon black pepper
-

Method:

Preheat oven to 220 degrees celsius. Cut off the beetroot stems 1 cm from the roots. Scrub the beetroots and wrap them individually in aluminium foil. Wrap the garlic pods also in foil. Bake the beetroots for 1 hour in the oven. Place the wrapped garlic pods also in the oven 30 minutes after placing the beets to bake. Cool and peel the beetroot. Chop the beets roughly. Place the beets, garlic, yoghurt, lemon juice, olive oil, cumin, coriander, cinnamon and paprika in a food processor and process till smooth and creamy. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Chill till required.



Taameia (Egyptian felafel)

Ingredients:

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

For garnish:

- 6 tbsp coriander seeds
- 2.5 tbsp sesame seeds

Steps:

1. Soak the fava beans overnight. Then drain well.
2. In a food processor, add: the fresh herbs (coriander and parsley), chopped onion, garlic, coriander seeds, and salt until almost a smooth paste.
3. Add the fava beans and pulse until kind of a sandy texture, but larger.
4. Place fava beans in the fridge until ready to use.
5. Pre-heat your oil to 175C.
6. Prepare your garnish simply by mixing them together.
7. Form your taameia into 1 ½ inch wide flat rounds. With the taameia on one hand, take some of the garnish and lightly press it on the taameia. Place on a tray lined with baking paper.
8. Cook the taameia in batches for about 3-4 minutes or until golden brown all around. Place onto paper towel to absorb excess oil.



Foul medames

Ingredients:

- 5 cloves garlic, sliced
- 3 tomatoes, roughly chopped or one tin
- 2 tbsp cumin seeds
- 3 cans fava beans
- 1 lemon, juiced
- 3-5 tbsp tahini
- Salt and pepper
- Olive oil

Steps:

1. In a medium pot, add some olive oil and slowly fry the garlic. Before it turns golden brown, add the tomatoes and let it break down a bit – about 3 minutes. Add the cumin seeds and toast for about 1 minute.
2. Add the fava beans and let it simmer for about 10 minutes. Check the consistency – it may need to be watered down a bit.
3. Either in the same pot or in a separate bowl, mash about $\frac{1}{4}$ of the fava beans and mix it back in.
4. Add lemon juice, some olive oil, salt, and tahina. Check the flavor and consistency and adjust. Serve topped with fresh herbs, olive oil and some tahini.



Dukkah-Spiced Carrots

Pan-roasted carrots become an exotic winter side when topped with dukkah, an Egyptian spice blend, in this healthy vegetable recipe. Dukkah plays nicely with other vegetables too. Try it on steamed asparagus in the spring, grilled eggplant in summer and broiled romanesco or cauliflower steaks in the fall.

Dukkah Spice Blend

- ¼ cup almonds
- 2 tablespoons raw pepitas (pumpkin seeds)
- 2 teaspoons sesame seeds
- 1 teaspoon coriander seeds
- 1 teaspoon cumin seeds
- 1 tablespoon chickpea flour
- ½ teaspoon coarsely cracked black peppercorns
- ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper

Carrots

- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 kilo medium carrots, parboiled and peeled and sliced lengthwise into 4 pieces (or use baby carrots whole)
- ¾ teaspoon kosher salt

Method

- Step 1

To prepare dukkah: Heat a small cast-iron skillet over medium heat. As it heats, combine hazelnuts, pepitas, sesame, coriander and cumin seeds in a small bowl. Sprinkle the mixture into the pan and toast, stirring constantly, until fragrant and light brown, 3 to 5 minutes. Return to the bowl to cool.



Step 2

Sprinkle chickpea flour into the pan. Toast, stirring constantly, until evenly browned, 30 seconds to 1 minute. Immediately scrape into a separate small bowl.

Step 3

Transfer the nut mixture to a spice grinder, mini food processor or blender; pulse until almost evenly ground. Add to the chickpea flour along with peppercorns and cayenne; stir to combine and break up any clumps of nuts and seeds.

Step 4

To prepare carrots: Heat butter in a large skillet over medium heat. Once the foam subsides, add carrots and toss to coat. Cover and cook, turning occasionally, until just tender when pierced with a fork, 6 to 10 minutes.

Step 5

Remove from heat, sprinkle (or toss) the carrots with the dukkah and salt. Serve warm.

*Tips to make ahead: Refrigerate dukkah airtight for up to 2 weeks.



Labneh Balls

Perfect for making in advance to serve as part of a larger spread, these rich, tangy labneh balls are a deliciously creamy addition to a mezze platter. Spread them on bread, dip them in oil and play around with the spices they're rolled in.

This recipe is common throughout the Middle East. Here's a version adapted from *Falastin: A Cookbook* by Sami Tamimi and Tara Wigley.

Ingredients

- 900g of Greek-style yoghurt, or 450g Greek-style yoghurt mixed with 450g goat's yoghurt
- 500ml of olive oil
- To roll them in: sumac, za'atar, black sesame, or chilli flakes

Method:

First drain the yoghurt (this step takes 24-72 hours so I've done it for you today).

Line a deep bowl with a piece of cheesecloth or muslin (a clean J-cloth is also fine, as an alternative) and set aside. In a separate bowl, mix the yoghurt(s) with 1 teaspoon of salt. Pour into the cloth-lined bowl, then bring the edges of the cloth together and wrap tightly to form a bundle. Tie firmly with a piece of string. Hang the bundle over a bowl (or attached to the handle of a tall jug so that the bundle can hang free – and drip – inside the jug) and leave in the fridge for 24–36 hours, until much of the liquid is lost and the yoghurt is thick and fairly dry

With lightly oiled hands, spoon a small amount – about 20g – of the labneh into the palm of one hand. Roll it around to shape it into a 3cm-wide ball, and transfer it to a tray lined with baking paper. Continue with the remaining labneh until all the balls are rolled. Transfer to the fridge for a couple of hours (or overnight) to firm up, then roll them in the spices.



Batata harra

10 medium potatoes, parboiled 10 min until al dente

6 tbsp ghee (clarified butter) or olive oil, to keep it vegan/dairy free

5 garlic cloves, minced

3 tsp coriander seeds

2 tsp chilli flakes

4 tsp turmeric powder

2 limes or lemons, juice and zest - save roughly 2 tsp for the garnish

1 cup parsley (with stems), roughly chopped

1 cup mint, roughly chopped

2 tsp dried dill (or 1 cup fresh)

salt to taste

olive oil, for garnish

Steps:

Chop all your herbs and mix them in a large bowl. Make sure not to bruise.

Chop your cooled potatoes into bite-sized pieces. Add half the herbs and toss to coat.

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.

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.

In the bowl of herbs, add the olive oil and the remaining 2tsp lime juice and gently toss to coat. Garnish the potatoes with the herb oil.



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

