



Middle Eastern Mezze Menu

Hibiscus & ginger punch

Toasted almonds with paprika and rosemary

Whipped feta with spicy chickpeas & sesame lavosh

Ottolenghi's filo spinach halloumi cigars

Beetroot tzatziki

Muhamarra

Magical Hummus

Labne balls with sumac and sesame

Kale tabbouleh

Fatoush

Spicy roast new potatoes with lemon & herbs

Miso onions

Spinach and toasted orzo with feta and chickpeas

Pitta with za'atar

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Ginger and Hibiscus tea

500 ml water
6 slices ginger
¼ cup maple syrup
3 T hibiscus flowers
Ice
Soda water or kombucha, to serve
Lemon slices

1. Heat water and ginger in a saucepan and simmer for 10 minutes. Remove from heat and add maple syrup and flowers. Leave to steep until cool.
2. Place in a jar in the fridge overnight, then serve with soda water, kombucha and lemon slices.

Ottolenghi's spinach filo 'cigars' Makes 21

7 sheets of French filo
¼ cup olive oil
¼ cup each parsley and mint, chopped
2 T sumac
2 tsp pomegranate molasses

For the filling:

3 red onions, diced
5 cloves garlic, minced
5 T olive oil
4 T sumac
1 tsp cinnamon
200 g spinach, blanched and chopped
½ cup pine nuts, toasted
1 ½ cups halloumi, grated
½ cup chopped mint
1 ½ cups feta, grated
Grated zest of one lemon

1. Make the filling by frying onions, adding garlic, then sumac and spinach. Add the rest of the filling ingredients and leave to cool.
2. Heat oven to 200c.
3. Take a sheet of filo with short side facing you. Cut the sheet lengthwise in 3.
4. Add 2 T of the filling toward one end. Tuck the sides over the filling, brush a little oil on the end, then roll all the way up into a cigar shape.
5. Place on a parchment lined sheet, brush with oil and sprinkle with sumac.
6. Bake for 25 minutes.
7. Serve with herbs.

Toasted almonds with paprika and rosemary

3 T coconut oil
2 cups whole raw almonds
4 sprigs rosemary, chopped
2 T maple syrup
2 T paprika
Pinch sea salt

1. Preheat oven to 160c. Line a baking sheet with paper and set aside.
2. Melt the coconut oil over medium heat. Add the nuts and rosemary and stir for about 2 minutes.
3. Add the maple syrup, paprika and salt and stir a bit more.
4. Transfer onto the tray, spreading in a single layer. Roast for 20 minutes. Stores for 2 months in a jar.

Whipped feta with spicy chickpeas

Creamy cow feta
1 cup Greek yoghurt
1 tin chickpeas, rinsed
1 T each: garlic powder, paprika and red chili flakes
Sea salt

Place feta and yoghurt in a food processor and blend until creamy. Spread on a platter. Roast the chickpeas with the toppings and some olive oil. When they've cooked about 10 minutes, pour onto the whipped feta and top with more olive oil.

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 (roasted 45-50 minutes at 180c: I wrap them in foil and roast till tender).

Small piece of cucumber, grated

1 t salt

200 g natural Greek yoghurt

1 garlic clove, finely chopped

1 T lemon juice

Method:

1. 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.
2. Add remaining ingredients, stir to combine, and taste. Season as necessary with salt.
3. Store in the refrigerator no longer than 24 hours. Can be eaten cold or room temp.

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.

Sesame Lavosh

1 cup flour

4 T sesame seeds

1 ½ t salt

½ cup water

¼ cup olive oil

2 tsp sesame oil

Flaky salt



1. Preheat oven to 165c.
2. Combine dry ingredients, then add wet and make a soft dough.
3. Divide into 4 pieces and roll each other between two sheets of baking paper. It should be virtually see-through. You can use a pasta machine for this.
4. Brush lightly with olive oil, sprinkle with sea salt and bake 10-15 until golden.
5. Allow to cool then break into pieces.

Magical Hummus

Recipe adapted from Sababa by Adeena Sussman from a celebrity chef in Tel Aviv who runs the restaurant Hakosem (Hebrew for 'the Magician').

1 1/3 cups dried chickpeas, soaked overnight, then drained and rinsed the next day

Method: Cook the chickpeas in 6 cups of water with 1 tsp baking soda. Then after about 20 minutes, remove about a ¼ cup of the chickpeas to garnish the hummus with later. Then keep cooking the chickpeas until they are nearly disintegrated, another 45 minutes. Cool them in their liquid.

To make the hummus: Place 1 1/3 cups cooked chickpeas in a food processor with 1.5 tsp citric acid (you can buy this at Moore Wilsons), 1.5 tsp salt and 1 garlic clove, minced. Drizzle in half the tahini with the food processor running. The original recipe calls for 1.5 cups of tahini but I find this too tahini-ish so I only put ¾ cup in.

As you add the tahini, also gradually add 1 cup ice water. The final hummus should have the consistency of buttercream icing. To serve: Spoon the hummus into a serving plate, top with cooked chickpeas, then garnish with good olive oil.



Labneh

750g thick Greek yoghurt and 1 T Salt

Toppings to roll balls in: za'atar, sumac, sesame, or chili flakes

Method:

To make the labneh: Place the Greek yoghurt in a cheese cloth, tie it with a string to compact it into a rough ball, add some salt 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.

When ready, transfer to a container and store in the fridge up to 7 days. Mix with a spoon to loosen slightly before using.

Oil your hands and roll labne into large marble-sized balls. Coat with toppings of your choice. Go for variety and colour! You can store labne balls in olive oil in the fridge. Remove from fridge a few hours before serving or the oil will be hard.

Fattoush

A typical Arab salad using the freshest seasonal herbs and greens and sumac!

6 gem lettuces (or baby cos)

5-10 spring onions

5 firm tomatoes

2 handfuls parsley

Handful fresh mint

Dressing: 4-5 T sumac, Sea salt, 9 T olive oil

Chop all the vegetables, then add the dressing and enjoy.

Spicy roasted new potatoes with lemon and herbs (aka Batata bil filfil) (adapted from *Falastin*)

Ingredients:

3 T olive oil
1 tsp cumin seeds, crushed
1 tsp coriander seeds, crushed
7 large garlic cloves, thinly sliced
1 red chilli, chopped
750 g potatoes, quartered and parboiled until slightly tender
½ tsp caster sugar
1 large lemon, finely zested and juiced
10 g coriander leaves, chopped
5 g dill leaves, chopped
Salt and pepper

Method:

1. Preheat oven to 200c fan.
2. Put the olive oil in a large saucepan on high heat.
3. Add the cumin and coriander and cook for 30 seconds.
4. Add garlic and cook a further 30 seconds.
5. Add chilli and then sugar, 1 tsp salt and a generous grind of black pepper.
6. Give everything a good stir, then pour onto the potatoes (a large bowl works well for this).
7. Transfer onto a lined baking tray and roast for 20 minutes until crispy.
8. Remove from oven and set aside to cool before adding the lemon zest, juice, coriander and dill. Serve warm.

Spinach and toasted orzo with dill yoghurt (adapted from *Falastin*)

This is a quick and easy dish to make for a midweek supper. It works well as a veggie main or as a side to a roast chicken or grilled salmon.

Ingredients:

500 g orzo
100 ml olive oil
2 onions, chopped
500 spinach
Salt and pepper
2 cups cooked chickpeas
½ cup crumbled feta

Dill yoghurt:

200 g Greek yoghurt
¼ tsp cayenne
1 garlic clove, minced
10g dill, chopped
1 T lemon juice
1.5 T olive oil

Method:

1. Place a large saute pan on a high heat and add orzo and toast for 5 minutes stirring constantly. Tip the toasted orzo into a bowl and set aside.
2. Return the same pan to a medium heat and add onions and olive oil. Cook for 5-8 minutes until golden.
3. Add the spinach in batches until wilted. Add 2 teaspoons of salt, a grind of pepper, and 500 ml of water. Bring to a gentle boil then add the orzo back to the pan. Give it a stir then reduce heat and cover. Cook for 10 minutes until orzo is just cooked but retains its bite. Add in chickpeas. Place on a platter.
4. Meanwhile, mix together all the ingredients for the dill yoghurt with ¼ tsp salt and set aside.
5. Top with dill yoghurt. Serve with a drizzle of olive oil.

Miso onions (Ottolenghi, *Flavour*)

These onions are a revelation! Easy as, but packed full of flavour. Two things are vital though: the roasting tray must be big enough to fit 16 onion halves. If not, roast fewer). And the onions must be basted well so they remain moist.

8 medium onions, skinned and halved lengthways so that the root still holds the onion halves together

100 g butter

100 g white miso paste

Method:

1. Heat oven to 260c (or 240 c fan)
2. Whisk the butter and miso with one litre of warm water.
3. Place the onions cut side down on a high-sided tray. Cover with the miso liquid. Cover tightly with foil and bake for 35 minutes. Then remove foil, flip the onions, and baste well.
4. Return to oven and bake uncovered for a further 45 minutes, basting every 10 minutes or so until a soft, deep brown.

Muhamarra dip

3 large red capsicum, roasted and peeled

3 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: Put all the ingredients except the lemon juice, pomegranate molasses, olive oil in a food processor and blend until very smooth. Add the lemon juice and pomegranate molasses, blend further then slowly stream in the olive oil. 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.

Kale tabbouleh

I was inspired by the Nov 2022 Cuisine magazine recipe from Marc Weir “freekeh Kale Tabbouleh”. I adapted the recipe and changed some things and the result was sooo delicious! I made it last week for a vegan friend who was getting out of hospital and there’s currently lots of cavolo nero in the garden.. When it’s chopped finely as in this tabbouleh, it’s so easy to eat lots of kale! There are also all the usual tabbouleh flavours: mint, parsley, lemon, olive oil, a few spices to give it sweetness (allspice, cinnamon, nutmeg). Sharpen your knives and start chopping!

Ingredients:

1 cup bulgar wheat, boiled till just done (leave a bit of bite to it)
80 g kale, finely chopped
40 g parsley, finely chopped
40 g mint, finely chopped
One red onion chopped, or a few spring onions, chopped
½ cucumber

Dressing:

½ cup olive oil
¼ lemon juice
2 garlic cloves, crushed
½ tsp allspice
½ tsp cinnamon
¼ tsp nutmeg
1 tsp salt
Black pepper

Method:

Put cold bulgar in a bowl with the chopped veg and herbs. Mix and add the dressing, then mix again. You may need to adjust the flavours, maybe add more salt, lemon or whatever you think it needs to balance the acidity.