

There's Hummus Among Us!



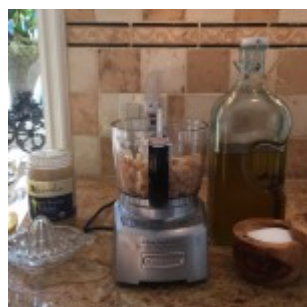
I'm ashamed to admit that I had never heard of, much less eaten hummus growing up or even into my young adult years. I think it is because growing up in the South, if it's not fried it doesn't exist. Today you can find hummus in any grocery store. In fact, our grandson, Miles, who is 2 years old today (Happy Birthday Miles!) loves hummus. Who knew a 2 year old would love chickpeas??

I actually really like hummus, but have never attempted to make it since I can buy it whenever I want at the store. However, I've read a lot about it and how to make it. It sounds so simple I thought I would give it a go.

Hummus is an Arabic word meaning "chickpea" – makes sense right? Chickpea and garbanzo bean are 2 names for the same thing, *Cicer arietinu*, a member of the Pea family. Garbanzo is the name used in Spanish speaking countries. The earliest known recipes for a dish similar to hummus are recorded in cookbooks published in Cairo in the 13th century. Hummus is a staple in many Middle Eastern cuisines. Hummus is a common part of everyday meals in Israel. A significant reason for the popularity of hummus in Israel is that it is made from ingredients that, following Kashrut (Jewish dietary laws), can be combined with both meat and dairy meals. Hummus is an excellent source of vitamin B6, manganese and dietary fiber. It is also a good source of protein, vitamin C, folate, phosphorus, iron, zinc and copper.

There are a zillion recipes for hummus. Some involve starting with dried chickpeas and others use them from the can already prepared. I decided to go the easy route with canned

chickpeas. The basic ingredients for any hummus is chickpeas, sesame or tahini, lemon, garlic and olive oil, most of which you usually have on hand in the pantry. In my version I add some Greek yogurt to make the texture a little creamier. I also like garlic. If you don't like it so much just use one clove. Also, it is important not to skip boiling the chickpeas



and removing the skins. It is a little time consuming, but the big benefit of doing this is that you will end up with a beautiful consistency. Don't be afraid to add more lemon, tahini or olive oil to achieve the desired taste. Grab some pita chips and enjoy a healthy snack!

Easy Hummus



1 15-oz can chickpeas/garbanzo beans

2-3 garlic cloves, minced

3 Tbsp. tahini

Juice of 1 lemon

1/4 tsp. chili flakes

2-3 Tbsp. olive oil

2 Tbsp. Greek yogurt

1 or 2 Tbsp. water

salt to taste

A dash of cayenne pepper, if you like a little "zip"

1 1/2 Tbsp. chopped parsley, reserve

1 Tbsp. toasted pine nuts (optional)

Drain chickpeas from liquid in the can. Place the drained

chickpeas in a small sauce pan and cover with water. Boil the chickpeas/garbanzo beans until the skins come off – about 5-8 minutes. Drain boiled chickpeas in colander, rinse with cold water and remove the skins (this is the slow part).

Combine all ingredients in a food processor. Blend until smooth adding small amounts of oil and water until desired consistency is achieved. Add more lemon or tahini if needed.

Place hummus in a serving bowl and drizzle with olive oil, chopped parsley and toasted pine nuts.