

WHAT IS HUMMUS

Hummus is a middle-eastern food composed of chickpeas and tahini, a paste similar in texture to peanut butter that is made from sesame seeds. Hummus is typically eaten with pita or other flat bread or used as a savoury dip.

Because both chickpeas and sesame seeds are wonderfully healthful, hummus is a nutritionist's delight. Chickpeas are a good source of protein, potassium and fibre. Sesame seeds are also a source of protein, along with vitamin E and a powerful antioxidant.

It is easy to make hummus yourself and you can adjust the flavours just like you want it. You may have to buy the tahini paste or you can even make your own tahini from sesame seeds and olive oil.

To make hummus, no cooking is required -- just a food processor/blender. Drain a tin of chickpeas. In this instance, the tinned variety is preferred over cooking your own from dried chickpeas. They mash up better than their more freshly prepared equivalents. Dump the chickpeas in your food processor and puree them.

BASIC HUMMUS RECIPE

Ingredients:

1 tin of chickpeas

HUMMUS

14 cup liquid from tin of chickpeas

3-5 tablespoons lemon juice (depending on taste)

1 1/2 tablespoons tahini (optional – sesame paste)

2 cloves garlic, crushed

1/2 teaspoon Himalayan salt

2 tablespoons olive oil

Method:

Drain chickpeas and set aside liquid from tin. Combine remaining ingredients in blender or food processor. Add 1/4 cup of liquid from chickpeas. Blend for 3-5 minutes on low until thoroughly mixed and smooth.

Place in serving bowl, and create a shallow well in the center of the hummus.

Add a small amount (1-2 tablespoons) of olive oil in the well. Garnish with parsley (optional).

BABY MARROW HUMMUS

Ingredients

1 tin of chickpeas

1/4 cup liquid from tin of chickpeas

1/2 cup fresh baby marrows, chopped

3-5 tablespoons lemon juice (depending on taste)

1 1/2 tablespoons tahini (optional)

2 cloves garlic, crushed

1/2 teaspoon salt

2 tablespoons olive oil

Method:

As above

AVOCADO HUMMUS

Ingredients:

1 tin of chickpeas

1 medium avocado, halved, pitted, and flesh removed

1/4 cup liquid from tin of chickpeas

3-5 tablespoons lemon juice (depending on taste)

1 1/2 tablespoons tahini (optional)

2 cloves garlic, crushed

1/2 teaspoon himalayan salt

2 tablespoons olive oil

Method:

Drain chickpeas and set aside liquid from tin. Combine remaining ingredients in blender or food processor. Add 1/4 cup of liquid from chickpeas. Blend for 3-5 minutes on low until thoroughly mixed and smooth.

Place in serving bowl, and create a shallow well in the centre of the hummus. Add a small amount (1-2 tablespoons) of olive oil in the well. Garnish with parsley (optional).

Serve immediately with fresh, warm or toasted pita bread, or cover and refrigerate.

Red Bell Pepper (paprika) can also be used instead of avocado

STORING HUMMUS

Hummus can be refrigerated for up to 3 days and can be kept in the freezer for up to one month. Add a little olive oil if it appears to be too dry.