

Matthew May's

TEACHING KITCHEN

BETTER LIVING THROUGH FOOD AND SCIENCE

September 30, 2023 "A Taste of the Mediterranean"

CLASSIC HUMMUS

2 garlic cloves, mashed and roughly chopped
2 15-oz cans of chickpeas (garbanzo beans), drained
2/3-cup tahini (roasted, not raw)
1/4-cup freshly squeezed lemon juice
1/2-cup water
1/4-cup olive oil
1/2-tsp. salt

In a food processor, combine garlic, garbanzo beans, tahini, lemon juice and olive oil. While processor is on, slowly drizzle in water. Process until smooth. Add just enough water to make smooth. Taste. Add salt a little at a time, as you may want to add less. Taste and adjust seasoning if needed. Remove lid from processor, scrape down the side of the bowl with a spatula, and continue to mix until smooth. Once smooth and creamy, transfer to a serving bowl and drizzle with a really good olive oil before serving. May be stored in refrigerator for up to 4 days.

MEDITERRANEAN FALAFEL/TZATZIKI SAUCE

1 cup dried chickpeas, soaked overnight in water (don't use canned chickpeas)
1/2-cup onion, roughly chopped
1 cup parsley, roughly chopped
1 cup cilantro, roughly chopped
3 garlic cloves
1-tsp. ground cumin
1 tsp. salt
1/2-tsp. cardamom
1/4-tsp. ground black pepper
2-TBSP. flour (use chickpea flour to make them gluten-free)
1/2-tsp. baking soda
Oil for frying

The night before, soak the dry chickpeas in water. Make sure the water covers the chickpeas by 2-3 inches, as they will triple in size. Drain the chickpeas and add them to your food processor, along with the onion, parsley, cilantro, garlic, cumin, salt, cardamom, and black pepper. Pulse the food processor several times until the mixture resembles the texture of coarse sand. Transfer the falafel mixture to a bowl and add the flour and baking soda. Stir together, then cover and refrigerate for about 30 minutes to one hour. Use your hands, an ice cream scoop, or measuring cup to form the falafel into balls or patties. If the mixture is too dry and crumbly, you can add a teaspoon or two of water or lemon juice. Once the falafel is formed, you can bake or fry them. This recipe will fry them: Heat oil to 350°F. Cook the falafel in batches for about 1-2 minutes, or until golden brown. Use a skimmer or slotted spoon to check the color of the falafel and make sure they don't overcook. Remove them to a paper towel-lined plate or tray. Serve the falafel immediately, while warm and crispy on the outside. Serve with tahini or tzatziki sauce (recipe follows).

TZATZIKI SAUCE

1 cup finely grated cucumber
2 cup plain yogurt
2 TBSP. lemon juice
1 TBSP. extra virgin olive oil
2 garlic cloves, minced
½-tsp. Sea salt
2 TBSP. chopped fresh dill
2 TBSP. chopped fresh mint, optional

Place cucumber in a clean kitchen towel or 2-3 paper towels and squeeze gently to remove excess water. In a medium bowl, combine remaining ingredients; stir. Taste and adjust seasoning if needed. Chill in refrigerator until ready to use.

MEDITERRANEAN PAN-ROASTED HALIBUT

1-pound wild caught halibut, portioned, skin-on
½-tsp. Lemon Garlic Sea Salt (found at www.eastcoastsaltcompany.com)
1-tsp. cracked black pepper
6 TBSP. unsalted butter
1 lemon, juiced
2 cloves garlic, minced
¼-pound multi-color heirloom grape tomatoes, cut in half (lengthwise)
¼-cup Kalamata olives, pitted, halved
1 red, yellow, or orange bell pepper, julienned

Pat the fish dry and cut into desired sized portions. Four portions are ideal for a 1-pound piece of halibut. Ideally, you want the portions to be the same size so they will cook evenly, at the same rate. Heat a skillet over medium-high heat and add butter. Cook the butter for about 2-3 minutes, allowing the water to

evaporate. The milk solids will rise to the top while the milk solids will fall to the bottom. The milk solids will brown once all the moisture has evaporated (the Maillard reaction). Once the butter has begun to brown, carefully add the portions of halibut to the pan (skin side up), leaving space in between each piece. This is important as you want the moisture in the fish to evaporate for the fish to brown (the Maillard reaction). Cook this first side for about 3-4 minutes, allowing a sear to form on the bottom. Turn fish over and cook for another 2-3 minutes on this second side. Ideally, the goal is to cook the halibut one third of the way through on each side, allowing for 'carry-over-cooking'. The halibut should be seared on the outside, and opaque and flaky on the inside when finished. Avoid overcooking. Remove halibut from pan and transfer to a serving plate. Add tomatoes, olives, garlic, peppers, salt, pepper, and lemon juice to the browned butter; stir. Cook for about 2 minutes or until the peppers are tender and tomatoes have begun to release their juices. Taste and adjust seasoning if needed. You want to taste the delicious brown butter, the salt, and the acidity from the lemon juice. Spoon the lemon garlic brown butter sauce over the fish and serve. You will notice the halibut finished cooking while it rested and while you made the pan sauce.

CREMA CATALANA

4 egg yolks

zest of 1 medium-sized lemon

zest of 1 small orange

1-cup heavy cream

¼-tsp. ground cinnamon

2 TBSP. sugar (divided)

2 6–8-ounce baking cups/ramekins

(Makes two desserts)

Heat oven to 300°F. Zest lemon and orange. You can use a vegetable peeler to remove large 'ribbons' of the zest, which will be much easier to remove later. Separate egg yolks from the whites (discard or save the whites for another recipe). In a small saucepan, bring cream, cinnamon, lemon zest, and orange zest to a low simmer over medium-low heat. Stir occasionally and do not let it boil. Once the cream mixture reaches a low simmer, turn off heat and allow the zest to steep in the hot cream for at least 20 minutes. Strain the citrus cream through a strainer or cheese cloth to remove the zest. Slowly pour the hot citrus cream into the egg yolk mixture (a little at a time), while stirring constantly. Pouring too fast will result in scrambled eggs. Place your 2 ramekins into a 9"x9"-inch pan. Divide the custard mixture into the ramekins. Pour the water into the pan until it's halfway up the side of the ramekins. Be careful not to pour any water into the custard. Bake 40-45 minutes or until centers are just set. A thermometer inserted into the center should read between 170°-175°F. Remove ramekins from hot water and cool them on the counter to room temperature, then refrigerate for a minimum of three hours. When ready to serve: Sprinkle powdered sugar on top or Bruleè them to make 'crème Bruleè'.