

Basil Hummus

We usually made a big batch of this hummus/pesto hybrid with our last major harvest of basil right before Thanksgiving and then freeze most of it in small airtight containers. It will stand up well in the freezer for at least six months, so you can have the taste of summer throughout the winter and spring.

Try a warm side dish of quartered waxy new potatoes with a good few dollops of this as a dressing (nothing else needed). If you are taking a hike rather than sitting around a table this Thanksgiving Day, pack a sandwich with this spread on toasted sprouted grain bread with a slice or two of Tofurky, sliced red bell pepper and romaine. It's a great vegan option for Thanksgiving solo or lite!

Ingredients

- 1 cup raw cashews or cashew pieces
- 1 cup hot water (approx. 180F)
- 3-4 cloves garlic, smashed then minced
- 3 cups sweet basil leaves, packed
- 3 cups cooked garbanzos
- 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1/4 cup sesame tahini
- 1/3 cup fresh lemon juice
- 2/3 cups nutritional yeast
- 3/4 to 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- Pinch of black pepper, cayenne or Tabasco sauce

Directions

Start ahead by soaking 1 cup of cashews in hot water.

Smash and chopped your garlic and set aside for 10 minutes.

Drain cashews reserving the liquid.

Blend garlic, olive oil, tahini and lemon juice. Slowly add basil leaves and keep blending. You can add up to a 1/4 cup of water from cashew soaking at this point. When all basil is ground to fairly fine particles, add nutritional yeast and keep blending. Then slowly add garbanzos and blend, adding additional water as needed to keep your bender from conking out. (I use an immersion blender.)

Add 3/4 teaspoon of salt and a pinch of your preferred pepper. Taste and adjust seasonings to your liking.

Nutritional tips:

Garbanzos. The morning before making hummus, soak your garbanzos for about 8 hours. Then drain them and allow them to sprout in a cool place (refrigerator okay if your house is warm). Cook them until they are tender.

Nutritional yeast. If you adhere to a plant-based diet, buy nutritional yeast fortified with vitamin B-12, a nutrient missing from vegan diets.

Garlic. Crushing and/or chopping garlic 10 minutes ahead of cooking it or combining it with other ingredients will preserve its beneficial compounds.