

Lentil Falafel Salad with Lemon-Tahini Dressing and Pita Crisps

Serves 4

Ingredients

Falafels

- ¾ cup dry red lentils
- 1 and ½ cups water or vegetable broth
- 1 tbsp. nutritional yeast
- 2 tsp. ground cumin
- ¼ cup whole wheat flour (more or less)
- 1 tsp. paprika
- 1 tbsp. fresh oregano (or 1 tsp. dried)
- 1 tbsp. minced garlic
- 1 tbsp. za'atar (a mixture of dried herbs used in middle eastern cuisine)
- ½ tsp. cayenne pepper
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 3-4 tbsp. oil (enough to coat the bottom of a large sauté pan)

Lemon-tahini dressing

- ½ cup tahini
- ½ cup water
- ¼ cup lemon juice
- 2 tbsp. nutritional yeast
- Salt and pepper to taste

Pita crisps

- 1 pita pocket, cut in half lengthways to make two thinner slices of pita
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- ¼ tsp. ground cumin
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. garlic powder

Salad

- 12 oz. arugala
- 2 cups tomatoes cut into bite-sized pieces
- ½ medium red onion, sliced thin
- 1 cup pitted Kalamata olives
- 1 medium bell pepper, cut into small pieces

Directions

- 1) For the falafels: Bring the lentils and water/broth to a boil. Simmer partially covered for about 20 minutes, or until the lentils are tender and mushy and most of the liquid has been absorbed. Set aside to cool for a few minutes, then puree in a food processor with whole wheat flour, nutritional yeast, cumin, paprika, za'atar, garlic, cayenne, and oregano. Season generously with salt and pepper. The mixture should be dry enough to



form into patties easily. Set out a baking sheet with a cooling rack on top. Heat up the oil in a large sauté pan. To test if it's hot enough, add a tiny bit of falafel mixture into the pan and see if it sizzles when it hits the oil. Then, form the falafels into about two-tablespoon-sized rounds and place in the oil. Cook for about 3 minutes, then press down lightly to make small patties (don't press them down flat though) and flip. Cook for another 2-3 minutes on the other side, until golden brown. Place hot patties on the cooling rack, so that any excess oil can drip off onto the baking sheet.

- 2) For the dressing: whisk together all ingredients until smooth. Season to taste with salt and pepper.
- 3) For the pita crisps: preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Tear the pita into small pieces and toss with remaining ingredients on a small baking sheet. Bake for about 10 minutes, or until crisp and golden brown.
- 4) For the salad: toss together the arugula, tomatoes, olives, and bell pepper. Top with cooled falafels and pita crisps, then drizzle dressing on top.