



Falafel

SERVES 8-10

On my first visit to Israel I was with a tour group in Jerusalem, walking through the crowded Machane Yehuda market, when I was distracted by the vibrant food stalls selling fresh pita, hummus, and colorful soups in huge iron pots. I stopped to watch a woman pull crispy falafel from the fryer and stuff them into pita, and I was determined to have one, so I stood in line to get it. My group hadn't noticed my diversion and had gone on without me. Our guide later found me and scolded me thoroughly, but I had no regrets. That falafel will forever remain in my mind.

These crispy vegetarian patties are a classic Middle Eastern snack made from dried chickpeas or fava beans (or a mixture of both). They're traditionally eaten with hummus or toum, a Lebanese garlic sauce, but I enjoy them dipped in yogurt seasoned with fresh dill and salt. I serve falafel as party appetizers or on a platter with summer vegetables and avocado, ready to be drizzled with yogurt. When I'm feeling nostalgic, I recall that day in Jerusalem and I stuff them into a pita.

INGREDIENTS

1 1/2 cups dried chickpeas
1/2 onion, finely diced
2 cloves garlic, minced
1/3 cup finely chopped fresh parsley
1/3 cup finely chopped fresh cilantro
3 tablespoons chickpea flour
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1/2 teaspoon ground coriander
1/4 teaspoon chile powder
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt

About 3 cups sunflower or grapeseed oil for frying

Yogurt Sauce (recipe below) for serving

PROCESS:

Place the chickpeas in a large bowl and cover with water by 2 inches. Let soak for at least 12 hours. Drain in a colander and discard the soaking water. Let the colander sit in the sink or over a bowl for about 10 minutes to drain as much water as possible.

Transfer the chickpeas to the bowl of a food processor and pulse until coarsely chopped, not smooth. Add the onion, garlic, parsley, cilantro, chickpea flour, cumin, coriander, chile powder, baking powder, and salt. Pulse until the mixture comes together like



a coarse dough. Transfer to a bowl and cover with plastic wrap. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour.

In a deep wok or saucepan, add enough oil to come 3 inches up the sides of the pan. Heat over medium-high heat until 375 degrees.

Meanwhile, form 2-tablespoon portions of the chickpea mixture into about 18 balls the size of golf balls, then press each into a thick patty. You may need to wet your hands if the mixture is too sticky. Place the falafel balls on a baking sheet until ready to fry.

In batches, gently place the patties in the oil, being careful not to crowd too much. Cook for about 2 minutes, then turn and cook for another 2 minutes, or until golden in color and cooked through. Drain on a plate lined with paper towels and sprinkle with salt. Serve the falafel with yogurt sauce for dipping along with crudité's of choice.

Yogurt Sauce

makes 1 cup

1 cup full-fat yogurt

1 clove minced garlic

2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill

1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt

In a small bowl, combine all ingredients. Cover and refrigerate at least 30 minutes, or up to 2 days.