

Modern Ayurvedic Eats

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Greece

Seasonality & Simplicity

GREEK MUNG BEAN SPREAD

When I was in Greece I tasted a delicious traditional veggie Greek dish made with fava beans. In this version I am using split mung bean instead. The taste is similar but I love the added detoxifying benefit from the mung beans. This is great as a side dish or serve it as an appetizer spread. Goes great with cashew tzatziki and the pecan-olive tapenade.

2 tablespoon grape seed oil
1 large white onion, chopped
3 cloves of garlic, chopped
3 springs of thyme
1 1/2 cup split mung beans
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon of ground cumin
1/4 teaspoon of chili powder
1/8 teaspoon of cayenne
3 cups of vegetable broth
1 tablespoon dry sherry
4 fresh flat-leaf parsley springs, coarsely chopped
1/2 red onions, diced
Juice of 1 lemon + more for taste
salt and freshly pepper

- 1.** Put a large pot over medium heat and add the oil. When the oil is hot, add the onion, garlic and cook until the onions begin to soften.
- 2.** Stir in thyme and split mung beans. Add cinnamon, cumin, chili powder and cayenne and cook for another minute. Add vegetable broth and dry sherry and bring it to boil. Add 1 teaspoon salt and turn down the heat and let it simmer with the lid on for about 40 minutes.
- 3.** Carefully transfer the mung bean mixture to a food processor or a blender. Add the parsley and lemon juice and puree until smooth.
- 4.** Season with salt and pepper if needed. Garnish the puree with chopped red onions and parsley. Squeeze more lemon juice if needed. Serve the spread with cut-up raw vegetables or flat bread.



CASHEW TZATZIKI & PECAN OLIVE TAPENADE

Tzatziki is often served with grilled meats and gyros, but it is also great on grilled or roasted vegetables! You can also serve up some tzatziki with your next appetizer spread along with some olive tapenade. I use some roasted pecans in this olive tapenade to bring a sweet nutty element to it. Try tossing it with cook pasta.

CASHEW TZATZIKI

**1 cup raw cashew soak for
6 hours or overnight**

1/3 cup of water

3 Tablespoons of lemon juice

2 teaspoons of apple cider vinegar

1 cup grated cucumber

2 cloves of garlic, minced

1 teaspoon of salt + more to taste

1. Add water, soaked cashews, lemon juice, and apple cider vinegar into a high speed blender and blend until smooth.

2. Squeeze the grated cucumber between your palms over the sink to remove excess moisture. Transfer the squeezed cucumber to a serving bowl.

3. Add the cashew mixture, garlic, to the bowl, and stir to mix everything well. Let the mixture rest for 5 minutes to allow the flavors to meld. Taste and add additional salt, if necessary. Serve tzatziki immediately or chill for later.

PECAN OLIVE TAPENADE

1 cup pitted kalamata olives

1 cup pitted green olives

1 cup pecans, toasted

**4 fresh flat-leaf parsley springs,
coarsely chopped**

2 garlic cloves coarsely chopped

1 shallot, coarsely chopped

1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes

Juice of 1 lemon

1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Combine the olives, pecans, parsley, garlic, red pepper flakes, and lemon juice in the bowl of a food processor and pulse to combine well.

2. Process until the mixture is coarsely pureed; with the motor running, pour in the oil in a steady stream and process until it is fully incorporated. Taste and season with salt and black pepper.



DOLMADES SALAD WITH CAULIFLOWER RICE

Dolmades or Dolmas are a tasty Greek treat made with grape leaves stuffed with rice and spices. It does take a little bit of time and commitment to make them. I created this Dolmades salad to satisfy my cravings but in half of the time. Using cauliflower instead of rice is a great way to cut carbs as well.

FOR THE CAULIFLOWER RICE:

**1 small head of cauliflower
cut into small florets**
1 Tablespoon olive oil
1½ teaspoon ground coriander
1/8 teaspoon salt

FOR THE SALAD:

1 Tablespoon olive oil
½ cup chopped green onions
½ cup chopped grape leaves*
2 Tablespoon capers
1 Table spoon caper brine
2 Tablespoon lemon juice
2 Tablespoons chopped parsley
1/4 cup finely chopped fresh mint
Salt and fresh ground black pepper

1. Heat the oven to 400 F. Working in batches, pulse the cauliflower in the food processor until it has the consistency of rice. Toss the cauliflower with the oil and the coriander and spread onto a rimmed baking sheet. Roast for 10 minutes.

2. Heat 1 Tablespoon olive oil on medium heat. Add green onion, capers, and grape leaves saute for 5 minutes then turn heat off.

3. In a mix bowl mix all the ingredients together and season with salt and pepper. Serve the salad warm or at room temperature.

*If grape leaves are tough, you can boil them in water for 5 minutes.





SPANAKOPITA

Traditional Greek spanakopita is usually formed into little triangles, but these are made into little egg-rolls which are better for dipping and hold together better. You can make these ahead of time and freeze until solid and store in the freezer for up to 2 months. You can bake them when you want some and you don't have to thaw the spanakopita before baking.

INGREDIENTS:

3 Tablespoon olive oil

1 large onion, diced

4 garlic cloves, minced

**1 1/4 pounds fresh spinach,
washed, dried and
finely chopped**

**Salt and freshly ground
black pepper**

**2 cups crumbled Kite Hill
Almond Ricotta**

1/2 cup finely chopped fresh dill

1/2 cup finely chopped fresh mint

**1 package filo dough (eighteen
9x14 inch sheets), thawed**

1/2 cup coconut oil melted

DIRECTIONS:

1. Add oil to a saute pan over medium-high heat. Add onion and garlic and saute until very soft, about 5 minutes and turn heat off and set it aside to cool.

2. Make sure the onion mixture is completely cooled. Using a large mixing bowl, add the onion mixture, dill, mint and chopped spinach (make sure is dried) with almond ricotta. Mix everything well together. Season with salt and pepper.

3. Unroll the filo dough and lay one sheet on a work surface. (Keep the remaining filo dough covered with a damp towel to prevent from drying out.) Brush the sheet with melted coconut oil. Place a second sheet of filo dough to top of the first one and brush with coconut oil, then repeat the process with another sheet of filo so you have three layers.

4. Using a sharp knife, cut the sheets lengthwise into 3-inch wide strips. Then cut the pieces crosswise in half, so you have 6 pieces total. Place a heaping tablespoon of the spinach filling near the bottom end of the filo strip. Fold the sides over, then fold the bottom up close the filling. Roll up the filo away from you to form an egg-roll shape spanakopita. Place it on a baking sheet and cover with plastic wrap while you fill and roll the rest. Repeat the process until finished.

5. You can freeze the spanakopitas or set oven to 375 F. Brush the tops of spanakopitas with coconut oil and bake for 20 – 30 minutes, until crispy and golden. Serve hot or warm with Cashew tzatziki Sauce.



ORANGE PASSION FRUIT TART

One of a traditional Greek dessert is an orange cake made with filo dough and syrup. I enjoyed the orange flavor but not so much the sugary syrup. I created this tart using almond flour as the crust and using passion fruit and orange juice for the tart filling.

CRUST INGREDIENTS

2 cups almond flour
2 tablespoons maple syrup
3 tablespoon coconut oil, melted
1 teaspoon almond extract
1 pinch of salt

FILLING INGREDIENTS

**½ cup passion fruit juice approx
7-8 small passion fruits**
**1 cup freshly squeezed
orange juice**
¼ cup maple syrup
½ cup coconut milk
4 tablespoon arrowroot powder
1 teaspoon agar-agar powder
2 tbs coconut cream

- 1.** Preheat oven to 350 F. Lightly oil 9-inch tart pan.
- 2.** Place almond flour in a large mixing bowl. In a small bowl whisk together maple syrup, almond extract, coconut oil and salt. Pour this mixture over the almond meal and fold to incorporate all ingredients.
- 3.** Transfer the dough to tart pan and press to form crust. Bake 15 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from oven and using the back of a wooden spoon, gently press down any puffed areas of crust. Set crust on wire rack to cool.
- 4.** If using fresh passion fruit, scoop the flesh and pass through a sieve to separate out the seeds. Use the back of a spoon to press and squeeze out all of the pulp.
- 5.** Add the passion fruit juice, orange juice, maple syrup to a saucepan and simmer on a medium heat for 10 minutes..
- 6.** In a bowl, whisk together the coconut milk, arrowroot and agar-agar to remove any lumps. Add the coconut milk mixture to the saucepan and simmer for another 3 minutes, whisk the liquid vigorously. When liquid is thick, remove from the heat and allow to cool for 10 minutes before pouring the filling into the tart shell.
- 7.** Place in the fridge to set for 3-4 hours or overnight. Garnish with one passion fruit juice and pulp if preferred.