

Dip it or Spread it! Camerota's Cupboard February, 2012

Dips and spread are popular any time of year when a crowd gathers. Presidents' Day party, anyone? Sometimes, though, the more we dip, the more our hips and bellies spread. This month's offerings are low in calories and fat but rich in healthy vegetables and legumes. Enjoy!

Hummus

(from *More Nutritious Still Delicious*)

This appetizer comes from the book created by the staff at the Nutrition Council of Greater Cincinnati, a great source for healthy recipes. Tahini is high in fat so this dip has been streamlined and uses less fat than in traditional hummus recipes.

1 can (19 ounces) chickpeas, drained and rinsed (save bean liquid)
2 tablespoons tahini (sesame seed paste that can be found in the natural foods section of most large grocery stores)
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 to 2 cloves garlic, minced
4 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
pinch cayenne pepper
Salt to taste

- Using a food processor or blender, puree the chickpeas, tahini, olive oil, garlic, lemon juice and cayenne pepper until smooth.
- Add $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the reserved bean liquid to thin the puree as necessary and process until smooth. The bean spread will thicken and the garlic flavor will intensify over time.
- Serve with whole wheat pita bread wedges, baked pita crisps or raw vegetable dippers. Can also be used as a spread on sandwiches.

Hummus Variations:

Add in $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of roasted red peppers for extra flavor and a vitamin boost, or add 1 teaspoon ground cumin.

Makes 8 servings (1/4 cup per serving), about 2 cups total

Nutrient information per serving (1/4 cup): 94 calories; 3 g protein; 11 g carbohydrate; 2 g dietary fiber; 4/5 g fat; .5 g saturated fat; 0 mg cholesterol; 91 mg sodium

Roasted Red Pepper and Eggplant Spread

(from AICR (American Institute for Cancer Research))

Remember those New Year's resolutions? You can revive them with this healthy versatile spread. And at only 50 calories in every serving, you can feel good about overindulging. It is also a good source of fiber, Vitamin B6 and folate, and an excellent source of vitamins A and C. Pair with whole-grain crackers, toasted pita wedges or fresh veggies for a party sampler. The leftovers make for a great sandwich spread in lieu of calorie-laden mayonnaise.

Canola cooking spray	2 garlic cloves,
2 lbs. sweet bell	minced
peppers, preferably a	2 Tbsp. extra virgin
combination of red and	olive oil
orange	1 tsp. salt
1 small eggplant,	1 Tbsp. red wine
about 1 lb.	vinegar

- Preheat oven to 450 degrees F. Cover 2 baking sheets with foil. Coat foil with cooking spray. Set pans aside.
- Halve peppers lengthwise and seed them. Arrange peppers cut side down on one prepared baking sheet. Place eggplant on second baking sheet and prick with fork all over. Roast peppers and eggplant for 30 to 40 minutes, until skin of peppers is blistered and blackened. Eggplant should be soft but not collapsed. Using tongs, transfer peppers to large bowl, cover with plastic wrap, and

set aside to steam for 20 minutes. Wrap eggplant with foil covering baking sheet, and set aside for 30 minutes.

- Using your fingers, peel peppers. Tear or cut flesh into 2-inch chunks, place in food processor and pulse 5 or 6 times to chop peppers coarsely. Scoop chopped peppers into mixing bowl. Pull skin from warm eggplant, using your fingers. Place eggplant flesh in food processor. Add garlic, oil and salt, and whirl to smooth puree. Add pureed eggplant mixture to peppers and stir to combine. Mix in vinegar.
- If serving now, let spread sit for 1 hour to allow flavors to mellow. Serve at room temperature, spread on crostini or serve as a dip, accompanied by carrot and celery sticks, cucumber slices and wedges of pepper. This spread will keep, covered in refrigerator, for up to 5 days.
- To freeze, spoon the spread into 1/2-cup plastic containers or pack 1- to 1 1/2-cups into resealable 1-quart plastic freezer bags. Lay the bags flat and freeze on the baking sheet.
- To defrost and serve, set the container of frozen spread on a plate in the refrigerator for 6 to 24 hours, depending on the amount. Or thaw in a large bowl of cold water for up to 1 hour, changing the water every 15 minutes. Once thawed, adjust the seasoning as needed, including vinegar, and serve as above.

Makes 3 cups.

Nutrient information per 1/4 cup serving: 50 calories, 2.5 g total fat (0 g saturated fat), 7 g carbohydrate, 1 g protein, 3 g dietary fiber, 200 mg sodium.

CARMEN'S BLACK BEANS

At the January PCIG meeting I sat next to a member we'll call Phil (because that's his name). He said that many of the recipes in this column look "tempting" but are either too hard, too time consuming to make, or have too many ingredients. This recipe comes from member Dick Fencil who got it from a friend in

Costa Rica. It's simple, healthy, and tastes good. And the aroma of coffee makes it special. This one's for you, Phil!

1 15-ounce can of black beans, drained & well rinsed.

1/8 cup oil

1/8 cup black coffee

1/8 cup sugar

- Puree beans in food processor.
- Mix together in a pan the pureed beans and oil.
- Add coffee and sugar.
- Heat and serve.

Makes 8 servings

Nutrient information per serving: 84 calories, 2.5 g protein, 10 g carbohydrate, 2 g dietary fiber, 3.7 g fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 164 mg sodium.