

Hummus

Irene Hussey, Pete Kerns, Haley Golz and Kelsey Ross

How to Make Basic Hummus:

- ◆ 2 cups well cooked or canned chickpeas, drained
- ◆ ½ cup tahini
- ◆ ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- ◆ 2 cloves of garlic, peeled
- ◆ Juice of one lemon
- ◆ 1 tablespoon of cumin or paprika
- ◆ Salt and pepper to taste

Preparation: Put all ingredients in a food processor and blend until smooth, adjusting the seasoning or adding some of the liquid from the canned chickpeas if needed.

History:

Hummus originated in Syria, but there is much confusion and speculation in regards to its actual time and place of origination. Some claim that hummus originated in Damascus in the 18th century, but many believe that hummus has been around for much longer, dating back to the 12th century. It is likely that a variation of hummus has been around for a long time, since chickpeas were some of the first plants to be cultivated by humans in Mesopotamia, and have been a source of food for humans for over 10,000 years ago. Sesame seeds have also had a long history in the Middle East region, but it is unclear when they began being mashed into tahini. The history of hummus in the west is much more recent - the first printed use of the word "hummus" in English was in 1955. Recently, Lebanon attempted to classify hummus as a "uniquely Lebanese food" after growing concerns that Israeli brands of hummus were outselling Lebanese hummus abroad.

Plant Components:

Hummus is composed mostly of chickpea seeds that have been allowed to soak up water. Chickpeas come from the plant *Cicer arietinum*, which is an annual legume that is naturally drought resistant. Tahini, the secondary ingredient, is a paste made of ground sesame seeds. The common seasonings of hummus, including lemon juice, paprika, olive oil, and cumin are also plant-derived substances. Cumin comes from a plant that is part of the carrot family. The whole dried cumin fruit is ground and used as a spice. The lemon juice is squeezed from the watery portion of the lemon fruit. Paprika plants are grown for their red fruits, which are dried and removed of their seeds and ground in to a red powder used for seasoning. Olive oil is comprised of oils produced by the fruit of olive tress.

Nutritional Highlights:

Hummus is a good source of iron, vitamins C, vitamin B6, and copper. It also contains high amounts of folate, and because of the large amount of chickpeas, is packed with dietary fiber and protein. Tahini is a good source of amino acids. When eaten with bread, hummus is considered a complete protein, and is also vegetarian and vegan friendly.