

Falafel (Vegetarian)

Preparation Time: about 25 minutes

Ingredients

250 mL chick peas, well drained (1 can)
125 mL onions, finely chopped
50 mL fresh parsley, chopped
1 clove of garlic, minced
50 mL all-purpose flour
10 mL ground cumin
10 mL each baking powder, salt, lemon juice
vegetable oil, for frying
prepared tzatziki, or make your own
Greek-style pita breads

Method

Step 1. Using a food processor, coarsely **chop** together chick peas, onion, parsley, and garlic, for about 30 seconds.

Step 2. Add the flour, cumin, baking powder, salt, and lemon juice; pulse until blended, about 10 seconds.

Step 3. Scoop out heaping 15-mL spoonfuls and shape into balls; flatten each ball to 1 cm thickness. Arrange in single layer on a tray

Step 4. Pour 30 mL oil into a heavy skillet; heat over medium-high. **Fry** falafel, turning once, until golden, about 4 minutes in total. transfer to paper towels to drain.

(Make-ahead hint: Let falafel cool; cover and refrigerate for up to 24 hours. To reheat, bake on a greased rimmed baking sheet in 350°F/180°C oven for 10 minutes.)

Step 5. OPTIONAL - Warm pitas in the oven (wrapped in foil) or on a plate for 30 seconds in the microwave.

Step 6. Spread tzatziki over pitas. Place 3 falafel on each pita. Top with chopped tomato.

Step 7. Fold or roll pita to serve.

Tzatziki Sauce

250 mL non-fat plain yogurt
80 mL cucumber (grated fine, drained well)
2 cloves garlic (minced)
1 mL each sugar, salt, pepper, dill weed

1. shred and squeeze cucumber until you get as much liquid out as possible
2. discard the liquid
3. Combine yogurt, cucumber, garlic, and all seasonings in a small bowl.

Chill to blend flavours.

What is Falafel?

Falafel is a popular Middle Eastern “fast food” made of a mixture of chickpeas, fresh herbs, and spices that are formed into a small patties or balls. It’s thought that falafel originated in Egypt as Coptic Christians looked for a hearty replacement for meat during long seasons of fasting or lent. It has also become a popular vegan food in Egypt and throughout the Middle East.

Falafel continues to be the people’s daily grub in Egypt, and you can find it from street vendors in almost every neighborhood. It’s often served in sandwich form with a generous drizzle of tahini, and loads of Mediterranean salad, along with slices of roasted or fried eggplant.

