

Toasted Cumin Hummus

Stand by the cumin like a hawk as you warm it up, stirring all the while, or it will turn bitter. And call me crazy, but I find that a pinch of sugar really rounds out the flavors in this garlicky, cuminy, lemony pre-dinner dip. Serve with pita triangles.

Makes 1-1/2 cups

1 tablespoon ground cumin
1 15-ounce can chick peas, drained and rinsed under cool water
Scant 1/4 cup tahini
3 tablespoons lemon juice, plus up to 1 additional tablespoon at the end (to taste)
2 medium cloves garlic, rough-chopped
1/2 teaspoon sea salt
3 tablespoons water
Pinch sugar

Pita bread, cut into triangles, for serving

In a small, dry skillet over medium heat, toast cumin until warm and very fragrant, about 2 minutes, stirring constantly with a heatproof spatula. Remove from heat and immediately transfer to a plate to stop cooking. Do not let the cumin burn.

In a food processor fitted with the metal blade, combine the chick peas, tahini, 3 tablespoons of lemon juice, garlic, salt, water, sugar, and 2 teaspoons of the toasted cumin. Puree until smooth. Taste, and then adjust the flavor with additional lemon juice (adding 1 teaspoon at a time) and/or salt to taste.

Scrape into a small serving bowl and sprinkle with remaining toasted cumin. Serve with pita triangles.