

Recipes from Palestine

Coconut and semolina traybake

400g fine semolina, 200g desiccated coconut, 350g sugar, 480ml milk, 480g plain yoghurt 2 tsp baking powder

For the syrup: 200ml water, 170g sugar, lemon juice to taste, good splash of rosewater

Preheat the oven to 180 degrees

Mix all the dry ingredients except the baking powder, then mix in the liquids and leave to rest for 15 min. Sift in the baking powder, combine (it will be a fairly wet mix) and pour into a well greased oblong cake tin.

Bake for approx 45 mins

In the meantime prepare the syrup by bringing all ingredients to boil, then simmer until reduced in volume. Leave to cool. Spoon cool over the cake.

Pumpkin or butternut squash dip

1kg pumpkin or butternut squash, 120ml lemon or lime juice, 4 cloves of garlic, 1/2 tblsp sea salt, 120ml tahini (sesame) paste, 1/2 bunch parsley

Peel, deseed and cut of the pumpkin into small peaces and cook or steam for 40 mins until soft. Drain well and cool, removing as much excess liquid as possible.

Blend in a food processor, then mix in the tahini. Crush the garlic with the salt and lemon juice, stir into the pumpkin mix.

Place the dip into a bowl and garnish with parsley, serve with strips of pitta bread.

Palestinian coffee – prepare in advance

480ml water, 6 tsp of finely ground coffee, 1 1/2 tsp sugar (optional) 2 – 3 crushed cardamom pods

Stir the coffee and sugar (if using) into cool water and stir until combined and sugar has dissolved. Pour into a pan and bring to boil over low heat, mixing gently, stop stirring and let mix froth up.

Remove from heat and let the mix settle down. Repeat above steps one or more times. Remove from heat, allow to settle down, then serve in small cups or glasses.

Hummus bi tahina

250g chickpeas, soaked in cold water overnight,(or 1 tin of chickpeas); juice of 2 lemons, 3 tblsp tahini, 3 garlic cloves, crushed; salt to taste, 4 tblsp olive oil

Drain the chickpeas and simmer in fresh water for an hour or until tender, reserve the cooking liquid. Alternatively use tinned chickpeas and their liquid. Process the chickpeas, lemon juice, garlic, and olive oil with enough liquid to obtain a soft, creamy consistency. Add salt to taste. Serve on a plate garnished with a drizzle of olive oil, a dusting of paprika, ground cumin and parsley. Serve with warm pitta bread for dipping.

Also goes well with falafel.