

COOK'S ILLUSTRATED

Falafel

SERVES Makes 24 falafel; serves 4 to 6

WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS

The best falafel are moist, tender, packed with flavorful seasonings such as onion and herbs, and sturdy enough to form and fry. We started by soaking dried chickpeas overnight to soften them slightly before grinding them into coarse bits along with onion, herbs, garlic, and spices. Instead of binding the dough with uncooked flour, which yields dry, bready fritters, we mixed in a cooked flour paste that added moisture without making the dough too fragile to form and fry. Cooking the fritters at a relatively low 325 degrees allowed their particularly moist interiors to fully cook by the time their exteriors were brown and crisp.



INGREDIENTS

Falafel

- 8** ounces dried chickpeas, picked over and rinsed
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup fresh cilantro leaves and stems
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup fresh parsley leaves
- $\frac{1}{2}$ onion, chopped fine
- 2** garlic cloves, minced

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

***** This recipe requires that the chickpeas be soaked for at least 8 hours. Use a Dutch oven that holds 6 quarts or more. An equal amount of chickpea flour can be substituted for the all-purpose flour; if using, increase the water in step 4 to $\frac{1}{2}$ cup. Do not substitute canned or quick-soaked chickpeas; they will make stodgy falafel. Serve the falafel with the tahini sauce as an appetizer or in Pita Bread with lettuce, chopped tomatoes, chopped cucumbers, fresh cilantro, Quick Pickled Turnips and Carrots with Lemon and Coriander, and Tomato-Chile Sauce. Serve the first batch of falafel immediately or

- 1½ teaspoons ground coriander
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 2 quarts vegetable oil, for frying

Tahini Sauce

- ⅓ cup tahini
- ⅓ cup plain Greek yogurt
- ¼ cup lemon juice (2 lemons)
- ¼ cup water
- Salt

hold it in a 200-degree oven while the second batch cooks.

INSTRUCTIONS

1 For the Falafel: Place chickpeas in large container and cover with water by 2 to 3 inches. Soak at room temperature for at least 8 hours or up to 24 hours. Drain well.

2 For the Tahini Sauce: Whisk tahini, yogurt, and lemon juice in medium bowl until smooth. Whisk in water to thin sauce as desired. Season with salt to taste; set aside. (Sauce can be refrigerated for up to 4 days. Let come to room temperature and stir to combine before serving.)

3 Process cilantro, parsley, onion, garlic, coriander, cumin, salt, and cayenne in food processor for 5 seconds. Scrape down sides of bowl. Continue to process until mixture resembles pesto, about 5 seconds longer. Add chickpeas and pulse 6 times. Scrape down sides of bowl. Continue to pulse until chickpeas are coarsely chopped and resemble sesame seeds, about 6 more pulses. Transfer mixture to large bowl and set aside.

4 Whisk flour and ⅓ cup water in bowl until no lumps remain. Microwave, whisking every 10 seconds, until mixture thickens to stiff, smooth, pudding-like consistency that forms mound when dropped from end of whisk into bowl, 40 to 80 seconds. Stir baking powder into flour paste.

5 Add flour paste to chickpea mixture and, using rubber spatula, mix until fully incorporated. Divide mixture into 24 pieces and gently roll into golf ball–size spheres, transferring spheres to parchment paper–lined rimmed baking sheet once formed. (Formed falafel can be refrigerated for up to 2 hours.)

6 Heat oil in large Dutch oven over medium–high heat to 325 degrees. Add half of falafel and fry, stirring occasionally, until deep brown, about 5 minutes. Adjust burner, if necessary, to maintain oil temperature of 325 degrees. Using slotted spoon or wire skimmer, transfer falafel to paper towel–lined baking sheet. Return oil to 325 degrees and repeat with remaining falafel. Serve immediately with tahini sauce.