

What is Cardamom?

Cardamom is a spice that comes from the seeds of a various plants in the ginger family. It is native to Southern India and also grown in Guatemala, which is the largest producer and exporter of this spice in the world. It has a strong aroma similar to cloves.



Taste the World is a new program at the Winters-Bellbrook Library to encourage the curiosity of new foods, to help patrons learn about spices of the world, and to enrich patrons lives with information about different cultures.

Did you know?

Cardamom is considered to be one of the world's oldest spices. The use of this spice dates back at least 4000 years. Ancient Egyptians used Cardamom for many medicinal purposes, as part of rituals and even for embalming. They chewed cardamom pods as a way to help keep their breath minty and to help clean their teeth.

What is Falafel?

Falafel are deep-fried balls or patties made from chickpeas or fava beans, plus fresh herbs and spices. Falafel is a popular Middle Eastern street food sold from vendors or fast-casual spots in countries such as Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Turkey and Israel, where it's the national dish.

Did you know?

The different countries of the middle east will have their own recipes for falafel. Like any good family recipe, variations abound. Some places use fava beans or have different dips or dressings.

Next Month: Nutmeg

Sources:

<https://downshiftology.com/recipes/falafel/>

www.greenearthspices.com

<https://www.myspicer.com/history-cardamom/>



The Flavors of Egypt

Taste The World

Falafel—Featuring
Cardamom

The “Most Delicious Falafel” Recipe

(From downshiftology.com)

Ingredients

1 cup dried chickpeas, soaked overnight - Included
1/2 cup onion, roughly chopped
1 cup parsley, roughly chopped
1 cup cilantro, roughly chopped
1 small green chile pepper (or hotter pepper to taste)
3 garlic cloves
1 tsp cumin
1 tsp salt
1/2 tsp cardamom - included
1/4 tsp black pepper
2 Tbsp chickpea flour (or all purpose flour instead)
1/2 tsp baking soda
oil for frying

Directions

The night before, soak the dried chickpeas in water. Make sure the water covers the chickpeas by 2-3 inches, as they'll triple in size.

Drain and rinse the chickpeas and add them to your food processor, along with the onion, parsley, cilantro, pepper, garlic, cumin, salt, cardamom and black pepper. Pulse several times until the mixture resembles the texture of coarse sand.. Scrape sides as needed.

Transfer the falafel mixture to a bowl and add the chickpea flour and baking soda. Stir together and refrigerate 30 minutes to an hour.

Use your hands or a cookie scoop to form the falafel into balls or patties. If you find the mixture is too wet, you can add another tablespoon of chickpea flour. If it's too dry and crumbly, you can add a teaspoon or two of water or lemon juice.

Heat about 3 inches of oil to 350 degrees. Cook the falafel in batches (about 6-8 at a time) for 1-2 minutes or until golden, flipping as needed. Then remove them to a paper towel-lined plate.

Serve immediately, while warm and crispy on the outside. They're delicious served with tahini sauce or tzatziki sauce.

PREP TIME: 45 mins COOK TIME: 10 min

SERVINGS: 18 falafel balls

FREEZE MIXTURE: up to 3 months.

Take a picture and send it to our Facebook Page!

Greene County Public Library (Bellbrook)



Tahini Sauce (from cookieandkate.com)

Ingredients

4 medium-to-large cloves garlic, pressed or minced
1/4 cup lemon juice
1/2 cup tahini
1/2 teaspoon fine sea salt
Pinch of ground cumin
6 tablespoons ice water, more as needed

Directions

In a medium bowl, combine the garlic and lemon juice. Let the mixture rest for 10 minutes, to give the garlic time to infuse the lemon juice with flavor.

Pour the mixture through a fine-mesh sieve into another medium bowl. Press the garlic solids with a spatula to extract as much liquid as possible. Discard the garlic.

Add the tahini, salt and cumin to the bowl. Whisk until the mixture is thoroughly blended.

Add water 2 tablespoons at a time, whisking after each addition until smooth. (It may seize up, don't worry.) After about 6 tablespoons, you will have a perfectly creamy and smooth, light-colored tahini sauce.

Adjust if necessary—with more lemon or salt to suit your tastes.