

Salt and Serenity

Falafel Sliders

Falafel recipe very slightly adapted from Cook's Illustrated Magazine. I added sumac to my falafel mixture. I love the citrus notes it adds. If you have a countertop deep fryer, you can use this to fry the falafel, instead of a Dutch oven. This recipe uses dried chickpeas. They need to be soaked for at least 8 hours, so plan ahead accordingly. Canned chickpeas will not work in this recipe.

Serves 6

Falafel:

8 ounces dried chickpeas
1 cup, loosely packed fresh cilantro leaves and stems
1 cup, loosely packed fresh Italian parsley leaves
1 small onion, coarsely chopped
2 cloves garlic, grated on microplaner
1½ teaspoons ground coriander
1 teaspoon ground cumin
2 Tablespoons ground sumac
1 teaspoon kosher salt
¼ teaspoon cayenne
¼ cup all purpose flour
⅓ cup water
2 teaspoons baking powder
8 cups vegetable oil, for frying

Accompaniments:

Tahini sauce (recipe below) or Tzatziki
Pickled Onions (recipe below)
Lettuce
Sliced tomatoes
Pickles
Slider buns

1. 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. Process the cilantro, parsley, onion, garlic, coriander, cumin, sumac, 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.

3. Whisk flour and $\frac{1}{3}$ 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. It will become very bubbly.
4. Add flour paste to chickpea mixture and, using rubber spatula, mix until fully incorporated. Divide mixture into 18 pieces and gently flatten into patties. Transfer patties to parchment paper-lined rimmed baking sheet once formed. (Formed falafel can be refrigerated for up to 2 hours.)
5. Heat oil in large Dutch oven over medium-high heat to 325°F. Add 6 f falafel and fry, stirring occasionally, until deep brown, about 5 minutes. Adjust burner, if necessary, to maintain oil temperature of 325°F. Using slotted spoon or wire skimmer, transfer falafel to paper towel-lined baking sheet. Return oil to 325°F and repeat with remaining falafel.
6. Serve immediately after cooking with the slider buns and all the accompaniments.

Tahini Sauce

$\frac{1}{3}$ cup tahini
 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup plain Greek yogurt
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup fresh lemon juice
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup water
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon kosher salt

Mix all ingredients together to make sauce.

Pickled Onions

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup red wine vinegar
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup water
1 Tablespoon Kosher salt
1 teaspoon sugar
 $\frac{1}{2}$ medium red onion, thinly sliced

1. In a medium sized mixing bowl, combine vinegar, water, salt and sugar. Stir in sliced onions. Set aside for at least 45 minutes.
2. Drain onions and discard liquid. Pickled onions will keep in an airtight container, in the fridge, for at least a week.