

Avocado Oil Baba Ganoush

A good friend of mine hosts several large parties a year, and has an amazing spread of food, some catered, but a lot of it homemade. While I've eaten some delicious meals at these affairs, the best part of these parties is his homemade baba ganoush.

If you're unfamiliar with baba ganoush, it's a creamy Mediterranean dip, similar to hummus, but made with roasted eggplant. You may find it in a somewhat authentic Mediterranean restaurant, but it's not nearly as common as hummus.

After the last party at my friends, I decided I didn't need to wait until the next gathering to get some; I could make it myself. It's surprisingly easy, and for as good as it is, it's pretty nutritious. Of course, when you eat it with loads of pita bread, maybe not, but you could dip carrots or cucumbers in it, right?

I've made this recipe a couple times now, but recently decided to try it with avocado oil instead of olive, without really knowing what to expect. Since it's traditionally made with good quality olive oil, I wasn't sure how the aromatic flavor of avocado oil would translate, but to my surprise, it worked out rather nicely. Especially when liberally drizzled over top before serving. The avocado oil gives the creamy charred eggplant a nice floral flavor, which compliments the lemon nicely. It's equal parts creamy, smoky, and aromatic.

Perfect for a party, where your guests will wonder why the hummus is so good.

Ingredients:

3 medium sized eggplants

1/4 cup extra-virgin avocado oil

1/3 cup tahini

2 cloves garlic

1/2 cup lemon juice (about 2 lemons)

Sea salt and fresh ground pepper, to taste

To serve: pita, sliced vegetables, crackers, olives

Directions:

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F.

Rub the eggplants with 2 tablespoons of the oil and lay on a baking sheet. Roast for about 20 minutes, until the skin is charred. Remove and let cool.

When completely cooled, peel the eggplants and put them in a food processor with the tahini, garlic, and lemon juice. Add a pinch of salt and pepper and puree until smooth and creamy. Taste and adjust the seasoning.

Transfer to a serving bowl and drizzle with the remaining oil before serving.