

Deep-Frying with Avocado Oil Plus Falafel Recipe

Deep-frying is not something I tend to do at home, but I've tried it with my avocado oil. My results have been mixed, but I recently came across a winner, which I'll share with you below.

If you've ever tried to cook something over high heat with extra-virgin olive oil, you know that it doesn't always work well because it doesn't have a high smoke point, which is necessary for successful deep frying. It can smoke up your kitchen, but also can create compounds that are not so great for you. You extra-virgin avocado oil has all the flavor points and a similar nutritional profile as a fine olive oil, with one exception — it has a much higher smoke point at 480 degrees F.

I've deep-fried a few different foods like potatoes, doughnuts, and shrimp. These all came out okay texture-wise, but some foods really need a neutral tasting oil. Since deep-frying isn't something I do anyway, and it's not the best use of a fine oil, I kind of gave up on that idea until recently.

One of my favorite types of food is Mediterranean, and my favorite Mediterranean food is falafel. If you've never had falafel, it's basically a dough made of chickpeas mixed with herbs and spices that is deep-fried until crunchy. I've made them a few times by baking them, but it's just not the same.

Recently, I made some falafel and before I was ready to bake them, I spied my bottle of avocado oil in the counter and decided to give deep-frying another shot — and I'm so glad I did. Not only did I learn that deep-frying with my oil can in fact be done, but it can also be delicious. The falafel were well browned, super crisp, and so tasty. They had a faint taste of the avocado oil, but it wasn't overpowering; in fact, I think it complimented the falafel nicely. I would (and definitely will) try it again.

If you've never deep-fried anything at home before, it's not that difficult, and you don't need a special deep fryer to do it. A heavy bottomed pot will do, and if you have a thermometer, it will make the job even easier. The ideal temperature for your oil is about 350 degrees F to start. If it starts to smoke, it's way too hot. I test mine by cooking one of the falafel. It should take about 5 minutes to brown both sides. If it browns much sooner, your oil is too hot.

Once you're done with the oil, I just pour it back in the bottle with a funnel and throw it in the trash that way. You can reuse it (for frying) if you want to, but I would do it sooner rather than later.

If you don't want to deep-fry your falafel, you can pan-fry them instead. Serve these with a salad, in pita, or just eat them as is.

Ingredients:

1 cups dried chickpeas, soaked in cold water overnight
1/2 cup rough chopped onion
1 small bunch parsley
1 small bunch mint leaves
2 cloves garlic
Juice of 1/2 lemon
2 tablespoons flour
1 teaspoon sea salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper
2 teaspoons ground cumin
1/2 teaspoon ground coriander
1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 bottle Ava Jane's Kitchen extra-virgin avocado oil, for frying

Directions:

Drain the chickpeas thoroughly and add to the bowl of a food processor with the remaining ingredients. Pulse until finely ground, but don't over process. The mixture should be almost paste-like and hold together fairly well.

Form the dough into balls or patties about 2-3 inches in diameter.

Fill a heavy deep skillet or saucepan with avocado oil and heat until 350 degrees F.

Fry the falafel until golden brown and crisp, being careful not to overcrowd the pan. Drain on paper towels.