

KASHKE BEDEMJAN | EGGPLANT AND WALNUT DIP

Ingredients

3 medium Chinese or Italian eggplants, peeled
4 TBSP vegetable oil
1 large garlic clove, minced
½ cup water
⅓-½ tsp kosher salt
⅛ tsp freshly cracked pepper
1/16 tsp cayenne pepper powder
⅓ cup walnuts
1 large yellow onion, peeled and diced medium
3 TBSP vegetable oil
2 tsp crushed dried mint leaves
¾ cup Greek yogurt
1 tablespoon Bloomed Saffron
A few fresh mint leaves add a nice touch as garnish (optional)



Method

Cut the peeled eggplants in half or quarters lengthwise.

Heat 4 TBSP vegetable oil in a medium nonstick skillet over medium high. Arrange the eggplants in a single layer in the skillet. Cover the skillet and fry the eggplants for about 7 minutes, or until golden brown on one side. Flip over the eggplants, cover again and fry the other side for another 5-7 minutes, or until the eggplants can easily be poked with a fork. Don't leave the eggplants unattended. The high heat will burn them very quickly.

Meanwhile in another skillet heat 3 TBSP oil over medium heat and fry the diced onion until golden brown.

Try this easy method for mincing the garlic: With the food processor running, drop the garlic through the feed chute and process for a few seconds, or until uniformly minced.

Add the minced garlic, water, kosher salt, bloomed saffron, cayenne pepper powder, and freshly cracked black pepper to the skillet with the fried eggplants. Cover and cook over low heat for about 15 minutes, or until the eggplants are very tender and all the water is cooked off. Turn the heat off and mash the eggplants with a fork or a potato masher to small pieces.

In the same food processor add ⅓ cup walnuts and process until very fine, about 1 minute. Do not over process, walnuts are soft and tend to turn to a paste very quickly.

Once the fried onions are golden brown remove the skillet from the heat and add 2 tsp crushed dried mint leaves. Stir to combine and set aside. Reserve 3 TBSP fried onion and mint mixture for garnish.

Add the rest of the onion mixture along with the processed walnuts to the mashed eggplants. Give it a good stir to blend well.

Stir in ¾ cup Greek yogurt to the eggplant mixture until uniformly blended.

Transfer the eggplant mixture to the serving bowl. Sprinkle the top with the reserved fried onion and mint mixture. Add optional fresh mint leaves for garnish

Serve warm or at room temperature with toasted flat bread or French Baguettes.