

A Slimmer Dipper For Healthy Hummus

(NAPSA)—A crunchy California endive leaf filled with a dollop of creamy chickpea hummus makes a great guilt-free snack. The contrast of the creamy hummus, lightened with olive oil and lemon, and the crisp endive leaf is both refreshing and delicious.

Easy to make, lighter, fresher-tasting chickpea hummus, made without the tahini, a rich sesame paste, shows off its versatility in the basic recipe, plus four simple variations: roasted red pepper and walnuts, curry powder and grated ginger, avocado and cilantro, and grated Parmesan and sun-dried tomatoes. Keep one or all on hand for a casual get-together, cocktail nibbles or snack attack.

The perfect slimmer dipper, California endive leaves are ideally shaped. They easily glide through a bowlful of dip or safely cradle a spoonful of dip without the threat of drips or spills.

Endive — Just One Calorie Per Leaf

At approximately one calorie per leaf, and with an impressive nutritional profile of vitamins A, B, C and K, beta-carotene, potassium and fiber, the concept of substituting California endive leaves for more-caloric chips and crackers is a no-brainer for the health-conscious savvy cook. Because the cost per pound of endive is cheaper than most chips and crackers, it's a less expensive choice as well.

Each head of California endive has about 15 leaves that are large enough for dipping. To prepare the leaves, slice about ½ inch from the base of each head and carefully separate the leaves. As each layer of leaves is separated, cut thin slices from the base until all the larger leaves are released. For extra crispness, give the leaves a 10-minute soak in a bowl of ice water. Drain, pat dry and store in a plastic storage container or food storage bag. Save the tightly packed endive hearts for a vegetable stir-fry or salad.

Because endive keeps much longer than other lettuces (10 to 14 days), there's even more reason



Endive leaves make a delightfully healthful dipper for flavored hummus.

to add American-grown California endive to your shopping list of refrigerated staples.

Light Lemon and Dill Hummus

- 1 can (15–16 ounces) chickpeas, rinsed and drained**
- 3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice**
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill**
- 1 garlic clove, chopped**
- ½ teaspoon salt**
- ½ cup extra virgin olive oil**
- 3-4 heads California Endive, stem-end trimmed, leaves separated, hearts reserved for other use**

Process chickpeas, lemon juice, 1 tablespoon dill, garlic and salt in food processor to rough puree. With motor running, gradually add the oil and process until mixture is creamy. Mound a heaping teaspoon into each endive leaf and sprinkle with remaining dill.

Variations:

Hummus with Roasted Red Pepper and Walnuts

Omit the dill from Basic Recipe. Add ½ cup broken walnuts, ½ cup cut-up rinsed and drained jarred roasted peppers, 1 teaspoon ground cumin and ½ teaspoon ground cayenne or other red pep-

per to Basic Recipe and proceed as directed. Garnish with coarsely chopped walnuts.

Hummus with Avocado and Cilantro

Omit the dill from Basic Recipe and use lime juice instead of lemon juice. Add 1 peeled and pitted ripe avocado, 2 tablespoons coarsely chopped cilantro and 2 teaspoons chopped jalapeño, or more to taste, to Basic Recipe and proceed as directed. Garnish with cilantro leaves.

Hummus with Curry and Ginger

Omit the dill from Basic Recipe. Heat 1 tablespoon curry and 1 teaspoon turmeric in small skillet until warmed. Add warm spices, ½ cup plain low-fat yogurt and 2 teaspoons chopped ginger to Basic Recipe and proceed as directed. Garnish with thin slices of green onion tops.

Hummus with Parmesan and Sun-Dried Tomatoes

Omit the dill from Basic Recipe. Add ½ cup each grated Parmesan and ricotta cheese and 2 tablespoons chopped oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes to Basic Recipe and proceed as directed. Garnish with coarsely chopped black olives.

For more healthy endive recipes, visit www.endive.com.