

Pomegranate Spread with Sweet Red Pepper



This recipe will make your taste buds dance. The following recipe makes 1 ½ cups and can be served with hummus, vegetables, focaccia, or your favorite bread. This'll be a real crowd pleaser.

Substituting flaxseed for the bread crumbs makes this dish gluten free.

Despite the name, pomegranate molasses does not contain any added sugar, and is made by naturally reducing pomegranate juice down to a thick syrup.

Ingredients:

2 large red bell peppers or canned roasted peppers-packed in water.

1 cup walnuts

3 Tablespoons bread crumbs or flaxseed

1 Tablespoon pomegranate molasses

1 Tablespoon lemon juice

½ teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon cumin

1 teaspoon minced fresh garlic

1 Tablespoon water

2-3 Tablespoons olive oil

Directions:

Preheat oven to 425 degrees.

Rub the peppers lightly with oil. Place in oven until the skins blister and turn a light brown – approximately 30 minutes. Throughout the baking time, turn peppers once or twice.

Place the peppers in a covered bowl so the pepper sweat. Sweating the peppers produces steam making the peppers easier to peel. Peel the peppers once they're cool enough to do so.

Roast the walnuts in the oven set at 350 degrees, or approximately 12 minutes. Rub some of the walnut skins off if you can because the skin can dull the color of the dip.

Blend the bread crumbs, molasses, lemon juice, salt, cumin, garlic, water and olive oil together. Let the mixture sit for 5 minutes to soften the bread crumbs.

Place the peppers and the bread crumb mixture in a food processor and pulse until everything is in small pieces but the spread still has some texture to it.

Add the walnuts and carefully pulse until the walnuts are small but still have some texture. This is an important step and should be done slowly. You still want to be able bite into some walnut.

****Here's a little added nutritional info about pomegranate that I found interesting:**

Pomegranate molasses is a rich source for vitamins B1, B5, B3, and B6. Thiamin or vitamin B1 helps in energy production and assists enzymes that help in the functioning of the cardiovascular system, muscles, and nervous system. Niacin or Vitamin B3 is known to resolve issues related to digestive and nervous systems.

Certain B-family vitamins found in high concentrations in pomegranate molasses are excellent for increasing muscle function and nervous system efficiency, which can help with peristaltic motion and the digestion of food, relieving problems with constipation, bloating, and cramping.

Pomegranates contain 14g of sugar per 100g, but don't let that put you off too much. 100g of pomegranates also contains 7g of fiber, 3g of protein, and 30 per cent of the recommended daily amount of vitamin C. Just don't eat too much.