

Warm Hummus with Spiced Lamb – David Lebovitz

<http://www.davidlebovitz.com/warm-hummus-recipe-with-spiced-lamb/>

Adapted from Soframiz: Vibrant Middle Eastern Recipes from Sofra Bakery and Cafe
by Ana Sortun and Maura Kilpatrick

The original recipe called for cooking dried chickpeas (1 cup) in 6 cups of water, along with a bay leaf and a pinch of baking soda, until soft, at least 45 minutes, then adding 1 teaspoon of salt during the final few minutes of cooking. I usually cook my own chickpeas but in this case, I went with canned, which I keep on hand for hummus emergencies, like I was having when I made this. If using canned chickpeas, you'll need two 15-ounce (425g) cans. (For those scratching their head at my math, the weight of canned chickpeas is often listed with the liquid in it.) Any leftovers can be marinated in vinaigrette and tossed in your next green salad.

A few things to remember: The hummus should be made with warm chickpeas. If using canned, warm the chickpeas first, either in saucepan or microwave, so the butter melts and the hummus is smoother. Pine nuts are fairly expensive, especially the ones not from China. (Which have been implicated in [Pine Nut Syndrome](#).) However, the pine nuts add a special flavor to the dish, even though they're used in a rather small quantity. (Pine nuts from other places are fine.) If you want to omit them, you can and a few pumpkin seeds would work in their place. If you don't have [harissa](#), use a generous tablespoon of tomato paste and add a sprinkling of red chili flakes along with the spices, for some heat. Ground beef or poultry could be swapped out for the lamb, although it won't have the same flavor. For serving, ideally the hummus should be served warm along with the spiced lamb. This is one of those places where the often-maligned microwave oven could come in handy, to reheat it before topping it with the spiced lamb mixture. Conversely, you can warm the hummus in a shallow baking dish, in a 300°F (150°C) oven, covered with foil for 15 minutes.

For the hummus

2 cups (340g) warm chickpeas, drained, liquid reserved
3 to 4 teaspoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
1/2 teaspoon salt
3/4 teaspoon ground cumin
2 tablespoons butter, salted or unsalted, at room temperature
2 tablespoons olive oil
For the spiced lamb
8 ounces (225g) ground lamb
1 tablespoon olive oil
3/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon ground allspice
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/8 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/2 cup (110g) canned chopped tomatoes, with liquid
1/4 cup (60ml) chickpea cooking liquid
4 scallions, chopped (white and green parts)
1 1/2 teaspoons harissa
a squeeze of fresh lemon juice
1 tablespoons chopped flat-leaf parsley
2 tablespoons toasted pine nuts

+ ground cumin and hot pepper (Andrew)

For the hummus

1. Puree chickpeas with 3 teaspoons of the lemon juice, salt, and cumin in a food processor or blender. Mix in the soft butter and olive oil.
2. While the machine is running, slowly drizzle in a scant 1/2 cup (125ml) of the chickpea liquid and puree very well, until the hummus is as smooth as possible. If necessary, add more liquid, a tablespoon at a time, until the hummus is the consistency of sour cream. (I ended up adding 2/3 cup but yours may take more or less.) Taste and adjust, adding another teaspoon of lemon juice or salt, if desired.

For the spiced lamb

1. Heat the 1 tablespoon of oil in a skillet over medium heat. Add the lamb, season with the salt, and cook it, breaking it up as it cooks, until it's almost cooked through, about 4 minutes.
2. Add the allspice, black pepper, cinnamon, tomatoes and 1/4 cup (60ml) chickpea liquid. Cook until the liquids are slightly thickened, about 3 minutes.
3. Stir in the scallions and harissa and cook for another couple of minutes, until the liquid is reduced (but the meat is still very juicy) then remove from heat and add a squeeze of fresh lemon juice. Mix in the flat-leaf parsley.

Serving and storage: To serve, spoon the warm hummus onto a serving plate or bowl and use the back of a soupspoon to make a crater in the middle of it, leaving a rim. Spoon the spiced lamb into the middle of the hummus and sprinkle with pine nuts.

There are some tips in the headnote before the recipe for serving the lamb and hummus warm at the same time. Pita or a similar flatbread, or crackers, are good accompaniments. If you want to make your own flatbread, you can use the bread base of my [man'oushe](#) recipe, and there is a recipe for yufka, a nonleavened flatbread, in the [Soframiz](#) book.

Both the hummus and lamb sausage can be made in advance and refrigerated up to 3 days.