

Falafel Salad with Balsamic Hummus Dressing

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I like to think of this recipe as a sort of "un-stuffed" falafel pita. Up-scale Israeli street food, perhaps? It was a number of years back when I discovered how amazingly well the bold flavor of balsamic vinegar accentuates a rich, creamy chickpea hummus. My sister had ordered a falafel plate and a garden salad with balsamic dressing from a local restaurant. I was the beneficiary who received her leftovers. I mixed them together and the combination was a new instant favorite of mine. It was as simple as that.

As a timesaver, I recommend using good quality frozen falafel balls or a falafel mix, instead of preparing falafel from scratch. Note: If you want to ensure your falafel have the quintessential golden-brown, crisp exterior, you're going to have to fry them. I prepared mine using my air-fryer, hence the more toned-down earth-tone brown color. Still awesomely delicious. Enjoy.

Dairy-Free Serves 4-6

Salad

- 1 large head Romaine Lettuce, torn
- 2 cups Cherry or Grape Tomatoes, sliced in half
- 1 English Cucumber, large diced
- 1 medium Yellow Onion, thinly sliced
- 4-5 Israeli Pickles, sliced
- 10-15 Prepared Falafel Balls, halved

Pita Croutons

- 2 Pita Bread
- 4-5 tablespoon Olive oil
- Sea Salt, to taste

Balsamic Hummus Dressing

- ½ cup prepared Classic Hummus
- 1 tablespoon Balsamic Vinegar
- ¼ cup Mayonnaise
- 2 cloves Garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon fresh Lemon Juice
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Method

Prepare the dressing: To prepare dressing, combine hummus, vinegar, mayonnaise, garlic, and lemon juice in a small bowl and combine well. Add a small amount of salt and pepper if desired. Set Aside

Make the pita croutons: Cut the pita bread into small bite-sized pieces and lightly toss in olive oil. Arrange on a greased baking sheet or in a well-greased baking pan and bake in a 350°F oven for 10-15 minutes, tossing every few minutes. Remove from oven and allow to cool and harden.

Assemble the salad: Combine the lettuce, tomato, cucumber, pickles, onions and falafel. Pour dressing over salad and lightly toss. Add croutons and toss again. Serve and enjoy the taste of the Middle East (with a little hint of Italy.)