

baba ghanouj-ish

BY CAROLINE CHAMBERS

Serves 4 to 6 as an appetizer

Cook time: ~40-55 minutes (depending on how you cook your eggplant this is either very passive or more active!)

Tools:

- [Blender](#) (or [food processor](#))

Ingredients:

- 1 large eggplant
- 2 scallions
- 1/3 cup chickpeas (very small amount just for a bit of texture)
- 1/4 cup plain or Greek yogurt
- 3 tablespoons tahini
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- Juice of 2 lemons
- Juice of 1 lime
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/4 teaspoon smoked paprika
- Several grinds of pepper
- Dumpster dive for toppings: roasted red pepper, goat or feta or Parmesan cheese, fresh chopped herbs, toasted nuts or seeds, a drizzle of olive oil, red pepper flakes
- For serving: Fresh pita, pita chips, crackers, flatbread, crudites, etc.

There are two ways to cook your **eggplant**. One is totally hands off; one requires a bit of attention but yields a smokier, more delicious flavor.

Hands-off method: Coat the eggplant skin with oil (any oil!) and roast in a 375°F oven for 30 to 40 minutes, until totally tender. Set aside until cool enough to handle, then peel off the skin.

Smokier but more time-consuming method: Place the eggplant over the medium-high open flame on your gas grill or stovetop burner (no need to oil it). Turn every 4 to 5 minutes until charred all over and completely tender. Set aside until cool enough to handle, then peel off the skin and discard it.

Throw the **2 scallions** into the oven for the last 10 minutes if using that method, or onto the grill or burner for the last 4 minutes if using that method. It's OK for them to get very charred!

Throw the cooked eggplant and scallions in a blender or food processor along with **1/3 cup chickpeas, 1/4 cup yogurt, 3 tablespoons tahini, 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, the juice of 2 lemons, the juice of 1 lime, 1 teaspoon kosher salt, 1/4 teaspoon smoked paprika, and several grinds of pepper.**

Blend until completely smooth, 30 seconds to 1 minute. Add more salt and lemon juice until it's perfect.

Transfer to a serving bowl and, if you choose, garnish it up! I have lots of ideas in the “dumpster dive” section above. Basically, just scrounge around your fridge and pantry and make it look pretty! Serve with fresh pita bread, pita chips, crackers, crudites, etc.!

A FEW SUBS:

- There's really no sub for the eggplant
- Scallions can be left out
- Yogurt: Sour cream, cashew yogurt — basically any yogurt or white creamy sauce — or omit
- Tahini paste: Cashew butter or 2 tablespoons toasted sesame seeds
- Lemon and lime juice: 3 tablespoons apple cider vinegar