

Hummus from Scratch

Hummus is incredibly simple to make. And it's way cheaper than store-bought hummus! You can take a short cut here if you want to. You can buy canned garbanzo beans instead of the dried ones. I like the dried ones because I'm trying to get away from the BPA that is found in plastics and can linings. Hummus freezes well and will last for months.

This is very good with or without the red bells. This recipe makes about 5 cups of hummus.

2 ½ cups dried garbanzo beans. Put rinsed beans in a big pot and cover with water 1" above beans. Cook until the beans are tender when tested with a fork, about 1 to 2 hours. Cool. This should yield 5 cups. Strain beans and reserve the water in case you need it to thin the hummus. It tends to thicken up after it sits a bit. The red peppers will thin the hummus a lot. But if you're not using them, you'll definitely need to thin the hummus with the reserved water.

Two red bell peppers. Split each one into 4 sort of flat slices. broil for a minute or two. Cool and peel.

1/4 c. tahini (Most recipes call for a lot more tahini. But it's high in calories, so I only use 1/4 cup.)

1/4 c. lemon juice

1 to 2 ½ chipotle peppers in adobo (optional). The chipotles give it a wonderful flavor! These come in little cans and are available at most grocery stores in the Mexican food department.

4 to 6 medium to large cloves garlic

Blend everything with a hand held immersion blender. Start with the smaller amount of chipotle and garlic and add more if needed.

Tip: A can of chipotles goes a long way. I mash one or two into a can of refried beans and put them on nachos. Once you try it, you'll never go back to plain refried beans again. Freeze the leftovers as follows: spray a cookie sheet with cooking spray. Place the peppers one at a time on the cookie sheet so they aren't touching. Each one should be accompanied by its share of adobo sauce. Stick the cookie sheet in the freezer. When they're frozen, in about an hour, pick them off the cookie sheet, put them in a freezer bag and put them back in the freezer. This way, you can take out one at a time to thaw and add to refried beans as needed.

Tip: Hummus freezes very well. Freeze it in 1 cup quantities in bags or containers.

Tip: When freezing stuff on a cookie sheet, don't forget about it! The freezer will dry out the uncovered food really fast! Check it within an hour.