

Recipes included at this site, except where noted, do not appear in
A Worldwide Vegetarian Journey to Discover the Foods That Nourish America's Immigrant Soul.

January 2021

THE EVOLUTION OF CUISINE: BREAKFAST, A NEW PERSPECTIVE

**Homemade *Hummus* with Sun-Dried Tomatoes
on Toast with Tomato Slices**

Israeli *Couscous* and Chick Pea Salad with Dates

**Lemon-Steamed Artichokes with Blender Hollandaise
Sauce**

Marinated Israeli *Couscous* Salad with Sliced Egg

Poached Eggs Over Pan-Roasted and Steamed Millet

Tostados* with Scrambled Eggs, Cheddar, and *Salsa

We usually associate cuisine with a cultural group or a geographic region. It reflects the foods that can be obtained in the region of habitation or by trade. We could, if pressed, apply the term cuisine to the food habits of a single family. Climate, religious considerations, the trade that fills the shelves of our grocery stores, and our own preferences be it vegetarianism, veganism, paleo, or cultural influences, all factors in the larger concept of cuisine, can apply to the food you buy and the meals you cook for your family too.

Many of us enjoy researching the influences that have made a nation's eating habits an identifiable cuisine as I documented in *A Worldwide Vegetarian Journey to Discover the Food That Nourish America's Immigrant Soul* but few of us are fortunate enough to experience the birth of a cuisine. Those of us born just before or during World War II have had that rare opportunity. As I have mentioned on other occasions, watching the evolution from foods that will allow a people to simply survive to a cuisine which allows those people to thrive is a gradual process. The influences on the process come from many sectors. Israel's development of a cuisine has been a modern day laboratory for us.

When you study the early days of the settlement of the region that became the nation of Israel you see an immediate change for most settlers in what was eaten for breakfast. The emphasis was on fresh vegetables and dairy, especially yogurt and *feta* cheese. The hot, dry desert climate of the Middle East means that vegetables, once harvested, must be refrigerated and then consumed quickly for maximum quality. It also means that fresh milk must be immediately processed to prevent spoilage. Yogurt and cheese, thus, became cornerstones

*Kibbutz – Kalia, before and
after settlement and development*



of the infant cuisine and part of a nourishing breakfast. Conquering the desert through irrigation was a major agricultural goal but until that was accomplished grains and a significant number of grain products had to be imported. The dry cereals that fill long aisles in our grocery stores, pancakes, waffles, croissants, and even toast were, therefore, not everyday breakfast

options. Meats, which might be offered for breakfast today, were, in the early years of the Israeli nation, in short supply due to the lack of grazing lands. Dairy herds were allowed what forage was available.



Greenhouses and small dairy herds were established on the *kibbutzim*. Everybody kept chickens. The vegetables grown and dairy products produced became the basis for all meals; the fruit trees were planted but far from mature enough to contribute to the fledgling cuisine yet. Defending their land and developing that land into a productive state was job number one from day one.



Right there you can see how that Middle East experiment can inspire the vegetarian. Salads for breakfast . . . why not? That is one thing that has not changed as Israel has grown. Beans, *hummus*, and lentils for breakfast . . . why not? Vegetable-stuffed *pita* sandwiches for breakfast . . .? How about a stuffed artichoke or maybe steamed baby artichokes with a yogurt dipping sauce or just poached eggs over roasted and steamed millet. “Your cuisine” might include greeting the day with a baked rice pudding and fresh blueberries or scrambled eggs on tostados with a garnish of chili sauce. Or, heat those tostados with a slice of smoked provolone . . . what could be easier. Baked beans with apricots served with corn muffins is not just a Saturday night New England thing. It packs a nutritional punch in the morning and not just on Saturday. This breakfast change could be quite an adventure.

HOMEMADE *HUMMUS* WITH SUN-DRIED TOMATOES

Hummus

TPT - 45 minutes

30 minutes = chilling period

Often, when my day must begin too early, hummus spread on whole grain crackers becomes breakfast. Hunger satisfied, protein satisfied, and blood sugar addressed, that important, first meal of the day is deliciously observed, albeit untraditionally. Served as a spread for toast, accompanied by a mound of mesclun, this can be a special occasion breakfast/brunch. Accompany with a champagne flute of pomegranate juice with a big curl of orange zest dangling from the rim of the glass. Oh yes, simple but special . . . This hummus is a bit of a twist on the Turkish hummus which appears in volume I on pages 567-568 in “A Worldwide Vegetarian Journey to Discover Foods That Nourish America’s Immigrant Soul.”

1 cup canned chick peas (*garbanzos*)—seed coats removed

1 garlic clove—crushed

1/4 cup *extra virgin* olive oil

1 tablespoon sesame *tahini**

1/4 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice

Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

3 tablespoons *finely* chopped *well-drained* sun-dried tomatoes

Pinch Hungarian paprika, for garnish

Chopped, curly parsley florets, for garnish



Drain skinned chick peas in a sieve and wash until cold running water runs clear. Drain thoroughly.

In the work bowl of the food processor, fitted with steel knife, combine drained chick peas, crushed garlic, olive oil, sesame tahini, lemon juice, and black pepper. Process until a smooth paste forms. Turn into a mixing bowl.

Add *finely* chopped sun-dried tomatoes. Combine well.

Turn into a serving bowl. Sprinkle with paprika and parsley. Chill for at least 30 minutes before serving.

Serve with whole wheat toast points (triangles) and sliced tomatoes. Refrigerate leftover *hummus*.

Yields about 22 tablespoonfuls

Notes: *Sesame *tahini* paste is available in specialty food stores, natural food stores, online, and in well-stocked grocery stores.

This recipe is easily doubled, when required.

1/22 SERVING (i. e., per tablespoonful) –
PROTEIN = 0.9 g.; FAT = 2.6 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 3.2 g.;
CALORIES = 40; CALORIES FROM FAT = 59%

ISRAELI COUSCOUS AND CHICK PEA SALAD WITH DATES

TPT - 1 hour and 47 minutes;
1 hour = refrigeration period

This is another variation of the wonderful salads that Israelis enjoy by combining Israeli couscous and chick peas and the very special tastes of the Middle East. It is appropriate for breakfast, lunch, or dinner. The journey of Israeli couscous to our tables is a fascinating story. Emigrants from North Africa and other parts of the Middle East brought their love of couscous to Israel. The fine couscous did not find acceptance but customers found uses for larger “pasta balls” which became known as Israeli couscous and can most probably be found in your grocery store. Introduction through curiosity about a “new” food led to an accommodation to both customer bases. Increased acceptance led to a profitable industry—good for everybody and, in this case, good for a nation’s economy too. Israeli couscous is a very different product from the Middle Eastern couscous products available in grocery stores or the product scooped from bins in Middle Eastern markets. The substantial little pasta balls are manufactured in Israel to appeal to all Israelis, not only to Israelis who have emigrated from North African countries, to whom couscous is an important cultural food. It has been a very successful venture.

1/4 cup Israeli *couscous*
1 cup *boiling* water

1/2 cup canned chick peas (*garbanzos*)—*well-drained*
and seed coats removed
1 baby cucumber—peeled and diced
1 medium shallot—*finely* chopped
1 tablespoon *finely* chopped fresh mint
1 1/2 teaspoons *finely* chopped fresh oregano

2 teaspoons *calorie-reduced* or *light* mayonnaise
1/2 teaspoon *extra virgin* olive oil
1/2 teaspoon red wine vinegar

Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

1 medium tomato—chopped
2 tablespoons chopped dates

2 tablespoons crumbled *feta* cheese
1 tablespoon pine nuts (*pignoli*)



In a saucepan set over *LOW-MEDIUM* heat, combine Israeli *couscous* and *boiling* water. Cover and cook for about 10 minutes. Remove from heat and set aside for about 20 minutes. Drain thoroughly. Turn into a mixing bowl.

Add well-drained chick peas with diced cucumber, *finely* chopped shallot, fresh mint, and fresh oregano.

In a small bowl, combine mayonnaise, olive oil, and vinegar. Mix well. Add to *couscous*–chick pea mixture. Fold gently to coat. Turn into a serving bowl.

Season generously with black pepper.

Scatter chopped tomatoes and dates on top. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour.

When ready to serve, scatter *feta* cheese and pine nuts (*pignoli*) over.

Serve cold. Refrigerate leftovers.

Yields 2 entrée servings



Note: This recipe can be doubled, when required.

1/2 SERVING – PROTEIN = 9.1 g.; FAT = 8.1 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 33.3 g.;
CALORIES = 236; CALORIES FROM FAT = 31%

LEMON–STEAMED ARTICHOKES WITH HOLLANDAISE SAUCE

TPT - 1 hour and 20 minutes

If you love artichokes, you will love this recipe. Have you ever thought about artichokes as part of a breakfast menu? Sicilian stuffed artichokes are always a part of our Christmas holidays and I will travel almost anywhere to find the big globe artichokes at that time of year but, love them as we do, they are not entirely appropriate for breakfast. This artichoke treatment is just perfect for breakfast. Baby artichokes, prepared in this manner, make a very lovely presentation.

1/2 cup dry breadcrumbs
1 tablespoon *grated pecorino Romano* cheese

2 tablespoons butter

1 large lemon—halved
2 large globe artichokes

BLENDER HOLLANDAISE SAUCE:

1/2 cup *fat-free* pasteurized eggs (the equivalent of 2 eggs)*—*brought to room temperature*
2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
—*strained and brought to room temperature*
Several dashes ground red pepper (cayenne)

1/2 cup *hot* melted butter

1 tablespoon *boiling* water

Mix breadcrumbs and grated cheese well.

In a small skillet set over *LOW-MEDIUM* heat, melt butter. Add breadcrumb–cheese mixture. Cook, stirring frequently, until butter has been absorbed and crumbs are lightly browned and crisp. Set aside until required.

Fill a mixing bowl with cold water. Squeeze *one-half* of the lemon into the water. *Do not discard the lemon half after squeezing.*

Prepare artichokes by cutting the stems flush with the bases to form flat “seats.” Remove outer tough and discolored petals. Using a sharp knife, cut about 1/2 inch from the tops of the petals. Using a kitchen scissors, snip sharp tips from all petals. Rub all cut surfaces with lemon. Using a sharp knife, slice each artichoke in half from top through base to form two equal halves. Plunge the cut surfaces into the acidulated water.

Remove the artichoke halves, one at time. Using a teaspoon, scrape the exposed chokes from each artichoke half. Return to acidulated lemon bath.

Set up steamer. Chop lemon halves and place in the boiling water in the steamer.

Steam artichoke halves for 40 minutes, or until tender.

Just before you are ready to serve, put pasteurized eggs, *strained* lemon juice, and ground red pepper (cayenne) into the container of the electric blender or into the work bowl of the food processor, fitted with steel knife. Cover, turn machine on, *and then turn it off immediately.*

Remove cover insert, turn machine on, and *very slowly* add *hot* melted butter in a thin, steady stream.

Very slowly add *boiling* water in the same manner. Turn off machine. Pour into heated sauceboat.**

Arrange steamed artichoke halves, cut-side-up, on a heated platter. Sprinkle buttered breadcrumbs over.

*Serve at once.**** Provide a ramekin for each diner to hold the Hollandaise sauce for dipping. Refrigerate leftover Hollandaise sauce.

Yields 2 individual servings

Notes: *Because raw eggs present the danger of *Salmonella* poisoning, commercially-available pasteurized eggs are recommended for use in preparing this dish.



**Since the sulfur in egg yolks tarnishes silver, remember to use a stainless steel gravy ladle to serve egg sauces.

***Provide paper napkins and a bowl for discarded leaves.

If required, this recipe may be halved or doubled.

1/4 SERVING – PROTEIN = 6.8 g.; FAT = 28.6 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 18.1 g.;
CALORIES = 357; CALORIES FROM FAT = 72%

MARINATED ISRAELI *COUSCOUS* SALAD WITH SLICED EGG

TPT - 1 hour and 38 minutes;
1 hour = flavor development period

Israeli couscous, mughrabiye, or pearl couscous is really a commercial version of the North African pasta product brought to Israel in the 1950s. It was introduced as an alternative for rice and was preferred by immigrants from North Africa and eastern Arab countries. Although rather a challenge to find, mughrabiye is well worth seeking out even if you have to mail order it from Israel. It is made from the same toasted semolina as is regular couscous, but the balls of pasta are larger. Palestinian maftoul is quite different. It is made from bulgur and flour, not from semolina. We plate this salad onto black salad plates; the contrast is gorgeous. It complements most menus beautifully and is a good choice as a breakfast entrée and when a vegetable or soup menu calls for a bit more protein.

1/2 cup Israeli *couscous*
2 cups *boiling* water

1 1/2 teaspoons safflower *or* sunflower oil
1 teaspoon herb vinegar, of choice
1/4 teaspoon honey

2 hard-cooked eggs—peeled, well-chilled, and sliced
1 tablespoon *calorie-reduced or light* mayonnaise

1 teaspoon grated *pecorino Romano* cheese*
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

In a saucepan, combine Israeli *couscous* and *boiling* water. Stir, cover, and allow to stand for about 15 minutes, or until *pasta* is soft. Drain thoroughly and return to the pan. Add *cold* water to cover. Allow to stand for an additional 15 minutes. Drain again, thoroughly. Turn into a mixing bowl.

In a small bowl, whisk oil, vinegar, and honey together. Add to *couscous* and toss to coat well. Refrigerate for 1 hour to allow for flavor development.**

Divide marinated *couscous* between two salad plates, mounding it in the center.

Arrange a sliced egg on top of each mound of *couscous*, splaying the slices across the mound. Spoon or pipe about 1 1/2 teaspoonfuls of mayonnaise on top of the egg slices.

Randomly sprinkle grated cheese over each serving. Grind black pepper over each.

Serve at once or refrigerate until ready to serve.

Serve chilled.

Yields 2 individual servings

Notes: *We prefer an Italian ewes' milk *Romano* cheese in this salad; you might prefer *feta*.



**If convenient for breakfast plans, this salad can be prepared the night before to this point.

This recipe is easily halved or doubled, when required.

1/2 SERVING – PROTEIN = 12.7 g.; FAT = 12.5 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 35.7 g.;
CALORIES = 304; CALORIES FROM FAT = 37%

POACHED EGGS* OVER MILLET *COUSCOUS*

TPT - 61 minutes

Millet is not the name of a single grass but instead it is a term for the seeds of several species of grasses that have been important as food for humans and fodder for animals for at least 7,000 years. It is an especially important grain in Africa and India due to the drought tolerance of these grain species and was an important cultivated crop in early Asian civilizations. If you have to cook for someone with wheat allergies, this is an alternative well worth incorporating into your diet. Millets have a nutty taste that you may prefer to rice, barley, or wheat-based couscous and a nutritional profile comparable to wheat but, unlike wheat, they generally are a significant source of iron.



1/4 cup dry millet—rinsed and drained

1 3/4 cups water

Pinch salt

2 teaspoons butter

1 1/2 teaspoons grated *pecorino Romano* cheese

4 eggs

Grated cheese, for garnish

Place two *heat-tolerant* dinner plates in the oven. Heat to 200 degrees F. Preheat egg poacher.*

In a saucepan set over *LOW* heat, dry-roast the millet until lightly browned. Monitor carefully because the grain can brown quickly.

Add water and salt. Increase heat to *LOW-MEDIUM*. Cover and allow to cook for about 30-35 minutes, or until grains are soft. Drain well.

Add butter and grated cheese. Using a wooden fork, integrate butter and cheese while fluffing the steamed grains. Divide between the two heated dinner plates. Return to the warm oven.

Poach eggs. Slide two poached eggs onto each serving of millet.

Sprinkle each serving with a pinch of grated cheese.

Serve at once.



Yields 2 servings

Notes: *If your egg poacher is not equipped to poach four eggs at once, butter-fried eggs are also a good choice for this recipe. Those tiny one-serving pans are perfect for the task.



This recipe can be doubled, when required.

1/2 SERVING – PROTEIN = 26.1 g; FAT = 21.0 g; CARBOHYDRATE = 15.8 g.
CALORIES = 279; CALORIES FROM FAT = 68%



**TOSTADOS WITH SCRAMBLED EGGS, CHEDDAR,
AND SALSA**
Tostados con Huevos

TPT - 20 minutes

The recipe for scrambled eggs used here produces the softest, fluffiest scrambled eggs you can image. It might well seem to you that everybody “knows” how to scramble eggs but urging the protein threads to unwind and urging the whole mass to lift into fluffy moist mounds takes some doing and it took me some thought a few years ago. In an episode of “Nero Wolfe” the detective created by Rex Stout instructs two young assistants in the art of scrambling eggs. His approach was a forty-five minute-constant stirring over very low heat. He was, with all due respect to one of my father’s favorite mystery writers, partially correct but that constant stirring over low heat must occur at the end of the process. Shocking the protein strands over higher heat at the beginning of the process invites the unwinding process but maintaining that high heat to the end will only tighten the strands and not allow the moisture to lift the scramble, desirable for an omelet but not desirable for scrambled eggs. Over the years my eggs became less voluminous; they were beginning to look like the slabs of dry “scrambled” eggs that you usually get in a diner. What had I done? Well, for one thing I had replaced the cream or milk with water to cut down on the fat. I had eliminated the egg yolks, leftover from egg white recipes, to cut down on the chance of Salmonella contamination without taking into consideration the necessary water to fat ratio that helps to slow the coagulation process. I had eliminated the salt, assuming that the naturally occurring salt in the cells of the egg was sufficient to soften the proteins enough to prevent them from seizing tightly when cooked, and I no longer prepared the pan with butter, having switched to an oil cooking spray. M-m-m-m, I was onto something. I went back to the recipe I had learned from my grandmother and mother and there I was again with voluminous clouds of cooked eggs.

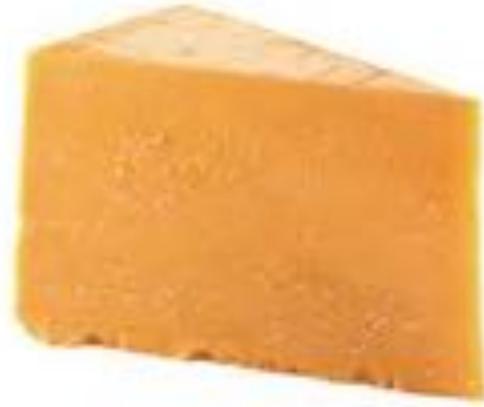
Weekend lunches or breakfasts can often become boring. When we have guests, these tostados are a delicious alternative to the usual breakfast or an ordinary lunch, especially when the cook is in a hurry to spend time with guests. We have often been known to jump at the chance to have these open-faced sandwiches for quick supper on a summer evening. They sure beat “beans on toast.”

4 packaged corn *tostados**

4 large eggs
1 large egg yolk
4 teaspoons light cream *or* half and half
Pinch salt
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

**1/4 cup *salsa*—a mild *salsa* is our preference
for breakfast**
**1/4 cup fresh corn cut from a cob *or* defrosted
and well-drained frozen corn**
2 ounces *sharp* Cheddar cheese—shredded

1/4 cup *salsa*



Preheat oven to 170 degrees F.

Place *tostados* on a baking sheet. Place in preheated oven to heat.

In a mixing bowl, combine eggs, egg yolk, cream, salt, and pepper. Using a wire whisk, combine well. Turn into a non-stick-coated skillet set over *MEDIUM-HIGH* heat. *Once the eggs begin to coagulate, remove from heat and place on another burner set at LOW.* Gently scramble eggs. Remove from heat.

Remove *tostados* from oven. Turn oven temperature up to 300 degrees F.

Assemble *tostados* by spooning a tablespoonful of *salsa* into the center of each *tostado*. Spoon a tablespoonful of corn kernels on top of the *salsa*. Scatter one-quarter of the shredded Cheddar cheese on top of the corn. Divide one-quarter of the scrambled eggs onto each *tostado*. Spoon 1 tablespoonful of *salsa* on top of the eggs. Return to the oven, now at 300 degrees F. Allow the loaded *tostados* to heat through and the cheese to melt.

Serve at once. Pass additional *salsa*.

Yields 4 servings
adequate for 2-3 people

Notes: **Tostados* are as readily available as are *taco* shells. They are a better choice for this breakfast offering than are the *taco* shells—they are easier to assemble and easier to eat.

This recipe can be increased proportionately.

1/4 SERVING (per *tostado*) –
PROTEIN = 13.5 g.; FAT = 13.4 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 20.1 g.;
CALORIES = 256; CALORIES FROM FAT = 47%



*Not only do these breakfast ideas excite appetites,
they provide a solid protein-rich beginning to the day and fuel for the day ahead.*

There need be no “protein fears” as you send your family off to work or school.

*Next month we’ll consider “protein fears,” that black cloud hovering
over those who would venture into vegetarianism. Please drop by,*

Judy

Please note that all food value calculations are approximate and not the result of chemical analysis.

Copyright © 2019