Sunflower Butter Bites

Makes 16 servings | Leftovers can be stored in the refrigerator in a sealed container for up to five days.

Ingredients

1 cup	**soft Medjool dates**, *pitted*
1 cup	**rolled oats** *(gluten-free if necessary)*
½ cup	**creamy sunflower seed butter**
1 tsp	**vanilla extract**
1 tsp	**cinnamon**
2–3 tbsp	**water** *(if necessary for consistency)*
½ cup	**semisweet chocolate chips**

Preparation

1. Process dates in a food processor until a sticky, creamy consistency is achieved (it may form a ball).
2. Add oats, sunflower seed butter, vanilla, and cinnamon; process until well combined.
3. If the dough is dry, add water, 1 tablespoon at a time, until the desired consistency is achieved.
4. Pulse in the chocolate chips just until incorporated.
5. Using your hands, form the dough into 16 balls. Place on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper and chill in the refrigerator for approximately 30 minutes to set.

Middle Eastern Lentil Salad

Makes 16 servings | Each serving size is 4 ounces; leftovers can be stored in the refrigerator in a sealed container for up to three days.

Ingredients

For the salad:

1 cup	**uncooked black beluga or French green lentils*** *, rinsed well and picked over*
3 cups	**water or vegetable broth**
1	**bay leaf**
1	**red bell pepper**, *stemmed, seeds removed, diced*
½	**small red onion**, *finely diced*
1	**medium tomato**, *diced*
¼ cup	**Italian parsley**, *chopped*
⅓ cup	**crumbled feta cheese** *(optional)*

For the dressing:

¼ cup	**extra-virgin olive oil**
2 tsp	**lemon zest**
2 tbsp	**fresh lemon juice**
1 tsp	**Dijon mustard**
1 tsp	**honey or pure maple syrup**
1 clove	**garlic**, *minced*
	Kosher salt and black pepper, *to taste*

**Do not use orange lentils, as they will break down and become too soft when cooked.*

Preparation

1. Prepare the lentils:
   - Add lentils and bay leaf to boiling water or broth, reduce heat to medium, and simmer, uncovered, until lentils are tender but still al dente, 20–25 minutes.
   - Drain and place in the refrigerator until they reach a temperature of 40° F. (You may place the cooked lentils in the freezer to speed the cooling process; or prepare the night before and refrigerate.)
   - Discard the bay leaf.
2. In a large mixing bowl, lightly toss the cooled lentils and the remaining salad ingredients together.
3. Whisk the dressing ingredients together in a separate bowl and drizzle over the salad.

Creamy Dill Raita

Makes 8 servings | Leftovers can be stored in the refrigerator in a sealed container for up to three days.

Ingredients

½ cup	**cucumber**, *coarsely grated*
1 cup	**whole-milk Greek yogurt**
1 tbsp	**fresh lemon juice**
½ tbsp	**extra-virgin olive oil**
1 clove	**garlic**, *grated*
¼ tsp	**sea salt**
1 tbsp	**fresh dill**, *chopped*
1 tbsp	**fresh mint**, *chopped (optional)*

Preparation

1 Mix all ingredients together in a small bowl. Enjoy the raita on its own as a savory, protein-rich snack; as a complement to the lentil salad; or as a dressing or dip served with fresh-cut vegetables or whole-grain crackers.