

K's Kitchen: Hummus from a pizza guy

By Kathryn Reed

Pigeonholing people is never a good idea – especially chefs. Just because someone works in a pizza place doesn't mean pies are the only things he knows how to make.



Marc Vaccaro is a bit of a world traveler who likes to cook foods from where he has traveled. Some of these tastes have resulted in pizzas, like Thai Red Curry Chicken pizza and Classic Margarita pizza.

But he has also created a hummus that is inspired from traveling abroad. The recipe below arrived in my inbox without solicitation. I also have not tried it. But it sounds so good that I wanted to share it before I got around to making it – just in case that takes a while.

Then again, maybe I'll just go to one of his restaurants to try it. It's on the menu at Rubicon.

Vaccaro has worked as head chef for Rubicon Pizza Co. at Northstar, Fireside Pizza Co. at Squaw Valley, and will have the same title when Base Camp Pizza Co. opens in Heavenly Village.

Hummus, Feta, and Olives

Hummus

3 C chickpeas (precooked)

$\frac{3}{4}$ C light olive oil

$\frac{3}{4}$ T garlic, minced

$\frac{1}{4}$ C lemon juice

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp cumin, powder

$\frac{3}{4}$ tsp paprika, sweet

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp kosher Salt

Place all ingredients into a food processor and puree until smooth. Some chickpeas will contain more moisture than others therefore, if necessary feel free to add a touch more oil or a bit of water to achieve the consistency you are looking for.

Store in the refrigerator for up to a week.

Marinated Kalamata Olives

3 C Kalamata olives in brine

$\frac{1}{2}$ bunch oregano, fresh

$\frac{1}{2}$ T red chili flakes

1 T garlic, minced

1 C extra virgin olive oil

Remove olives from brine and place in a large mixing bowl.

Strip the leaves from the fresh oregano and add to the bowl, along with half teaspoon of crushed red chili flakes and 1 tablespoon of minced garlic.

Add a cup of olive oil and give the ingredients a quick mix.

Pour into a container and store in the refrigerator for up to a week.

Pita Herb Blend

2 T oregano, dry

2 T thyme, dry

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp kosher salt

$\frac{1}{2}$ C olive oil

Place all ingredients together in a small bowl and mix well to evenly distribute the ingredients throughout. Be sure to remix the herb blend prior to using as the salt has a tendency to settle on the bottom.

Turn oven temperature to 450 degrees.

While oven is preheating, take the time to assemble your ingredients. If using a feta cheese that comes in a large brick or submerged in a brine, remove from brine and cut into $\frac{1}{2}$ inch cubes and assemble on one side of your serving dish. Take the freshly made hummus and place alongside the Feta, followed by the marinated olives.

When oven is hot, mix the pita herb blend with a spoon, and using a pastry brush apply a thin layer to one side of the pita and place in the oven to cook for roughly 5 minutes or until very lightly brown and slightly crisp. Cut pita into bite sized chips and serve alongside your already made dish of Hummus, Feta, and Olives.