

Falafel

Swick

Makes 20 medium falafels | Active Time: 30 minutes | Total Time: 1 hour 30 minutes

Chef's Notes

For a crunchier falafel with a slightly nutty flavor, roll the falafels in sesame seeds before frying.

For a more green falafel, add more parsley, mint, and/or fresh cilantro.

For Egyptian falafels, use fava beans (or a mixture of fava and chickpeas) instead of only chickpeas. Also, add additional herbs such as dill and fresh cilantro.

To make these falafels more keto-friendly, you can reduce the amount of chickpeas to 1/2 cup and add 1 cup of cauliflower instead. You can substitute almond flour for chana flour — along with 2 tablespoons of flax meal to help bind the falafels.

Step 1: Making the Falafel Mixture

- 1 cup dried chickpeas (1/2 lb)
- 3 to 4 cloves garlic, roughly chopped
- 1/2 sm onion, roughly chopped
- 2 to 4 tbsp flour (or chana flour to make them gluten free)
- 1/4 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp sea salt, or to taste
- 1/4 tsp white pepper
- 2 tbsp finely minced parsley
- 2 tbsp finely minced mint

Note: Using dried, not canned, chickpeas is essential when making falafels. If canned chickpeas are used the mixture will be mushy, wet, and not hold together.

Also, note that this recipe can easily and successfully be doubled or even tripled.

To make the falafels, place the dried chickpeas into a large bowl and cover with approximately 3 inches of cold water. Let soak overnight and then rinse and drain. You will have approximately 3 cups of beans after soaking.

In a food processor, pulse the garlic a few times and then add the onion and pulse again. Next, add the chickpeas, salt, pepper, baking powder, and 2 tablespoons of the flour and pulse everything together. Scrape the sides of the food processor down as needed.

When done, the mixture should resemble something between a coarse meal (sort of like couscous) and a paste and should hold together when pressed between your hand and fingers. If using regular flour, the 2 tablespoons are likely enough— if using chana flour, you may need to add a bit more.

Depending on the size of your food processor, you might want to do this in 2 batches—this is especially true if you are doubling the recipe.

Once done, scrape the mixture into a large bowl and add the parsley and mint. Stir to evenly combine the ingredients.

Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 1-2 hours.

Step 2: Additional Flavorings | Optional

- 1 tsp cumin
- 1/2 tsp ground coriander
- 1/4 tsp cayenne pepper
- 1/3 cup fresh cilantro, finely minced

We very much enjoy this recipe as prepared above, without the additional flavorings, because we often don't want to overpower the chickpea flavor. However, this recipe is excellent with these additional flavorings, too.

Try experimenting with different herbs and spices to see what you prefer.

Step 3: Forming & Cooking the Falafels

- 1 to 2 tbsp flour (or chana flour), if needed
- 1 to 2 tbsp flour (or 3 to 5 tbsp cooking oil (canola, vegetable or grapeseed)

You can form falafels into various shapes, according to your personal preference. Falafels can be round balls, patties, quenelles, or they can be formed using a traditional falafel scoop. The size of the falafels also comes down to personal preference. We typically use about 2 tablespoons per falafel.

The falafels can also be formed into crouton-shaped pieces and fried or baked. The chickpea mixture can even be roughly crumbled and fried.

Before proceeding, make a small test piece and taste it. Does the falafel have enough seasoning? Does it hold together during cooking? If not, add a bit more seasoning and/or more flour.

You can either bake or fry the falafels.

To bake: preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C). Bake for approximately 15 minutes, or until they are cooked all the way through and slightly golden colored on the outside. If desired, the baking tray can be oiled and the falafels can be lightly brushed or sprayed with oil—to help give them a bit more color. If no oil is used, the falafels will not be evenly golden on all sides, but they will still be delicious.

Frying falafels is the traditional way of cooking them and it also gives them the best color. If frying the falafels, add an inch or so of oil to a frying pan. Once the oil is hot (it's a good idea to do a tester to ensure the falafel cooks evenly throughout), shallow-fry the falafels—carefully flipping them once during cooking, until they are fully cooked through and golden brown on both sides.

Step 4: Serving the Falafels

- Tahini Sauce
- Hummus
- shredded lettuce
- sliced tomatoes
- diced onions
- diced cucumber
- crisp pickles
- pickled turnip or red cabbage

Serve the falafels as is, in a pita or wrap, or as part of a salad or grain bowl.