

# herbs

Herbs can make the difference between a one-note dish and one that sings—and when they're fresh and plentiful, why not make the most of them? Most herbs are amenable to being pesto-ed and then frozen in ice cube trays for leaner months. A serious surplus can be slowly dried in a 200°F oven and stored in glass jars. But there's something about enjoying them in their fresh glory that can't be beat, and while innovation is great, the classics are always in style. Mint in your mojito, basil with tomatoes? Yes, please.

## BLACK BEAN DIP WITH PARSLEY

FROM EAGRANIE YUH  
Makes about 1 cup

From start to finish, you can make this dip in about 10 minutes—and if you're organized, that can include doing the dishes. It's best if it sits for a few hours before serving, but just as good if you can't wait.

- 1–398mL (14 oz) can of black beans, drained and rinsed
- ½ cup parsley leaves, lightly packed
- 4½ tsp lime juice
- 4 tsp water
- 1 Tbsp ground cumin
- 1½ tsp olive oil
- 1½ tsp salt
- ¾ tsp pepper
- ¼ tsp hot sauce, like sriracha or sambal oelek

Combine all the ingredients in a food processor. Blitz them into a loose paste, adding more water by the teaspoon if needed. Taste, then add more salt and pepper as needed.

TIP: To really amp up flavour, toast whole cumin seeds in a large pan over medium heat. Stir occasionally until they are fragrant, then transfer to a mortar and pestle, and grind into a powder.

## MINTED PEA DIP

FROM EAGRANIE YUH  
Makes about 1 cup

Bright green and insanely fresh, this dip is great with crudités and crackers. Serve it with the kamut crispbreads on page 39 if you're feeling a bit show-offy. If fresh peas aren't available, substitute frozen peas.

- 2¼ cups fresh shelled peas
- ½ cup mint leaves, loosely packed
- 3 Tbsp olive oil
- 1½ tsp lemon juice
- 1½ tsp salt
- ¾ tsp pepper

diately drain the peas and dunk into the ice water; this stops the cooking and keeps their vibrant colour. Drain the peas well and pat dry between two tea towels.

Combine the peas and remaining ingredients in a food processor. Blitz into a loose paste, adding more water by the teaspoon if needed. Taste, then add more salt and pepper as needed.

In a medium pot over high heat, bring a pot of water to the boil. Have ready a large bowl of ice water. Blanch the peas for 1–2 minutes, until they float. Imme-



Photo: Debbira Mikaelson



## DILLY TZATZIKI

FROM EAGRANIE YUH

Makes approximately 1 cup

The two main components of tzatziki are yogurt and cucumbers—two water-logged ingredients that can turn this much-maligned dip into a soggy and flavourless disappointment. A few extra steps transform this staple of Greek tavernas into a sumptuous dip that is worth the added effort.

2½ cups full-fat yogurt  
4–6 Lebanese cucumbers, ends trimmed  
1 Tbsp + ¼ tsp salt, divided  
⅓ cup finely chopped dill  
1 Tbsp lemon juice  
zest of 1 lemon  
1 Tbsp olive oil  
½ tsp finely minced garlic  
½ tsp finely chopped mint  
¼ tsp pepper

The night before you plan to make the tzatziki, line a strainer with cheesecloth. Place the yogurt in the strainer and sit it over a large bowl. Cover and refrigerate overnight. The next morning, you will have a thick cheese (called *labneh*) in the strainer. You should have about 1¼ cups of labneh; it's okay if you have slightly more or less.

Grate the cucumbers using the coarse holes of a grater. Place the grated cucumber into a strainer and sit it over a large bowl. Sprinkle the cucumber with 1 Tbsp salt, and stir to combine. Let the cucumber sit for 15 minutes, then squeeze handfuls of the cucumber to remove as much water as possible. You should have about ¾ of a cup of cucumber.

Into a medium bowl, combine the labneh, cucumber, dill, lemon juice, lemon zest, olive oil, garlic, mint, pepper, and remaining salt. Taste, then add more salt and pepper as needed.

TIPS:

- If you don't have time or patience to make labneh, substitute 1¼ cups of Greek yogurt.
- Don't discard the whey that drains out of the labneh. Toss it into a smoothie or juice for a protein and calcium boost. Or include it in a marinade; the lactic acid in whey acts as a meat tenderizer.
- Lebanese cucumbers are sometimes sold as dill cucumbers or miniature cucumbers. In a pinch, you can substitute a long English cucumber.
- If you prefer a punchier tzatziki, increase the garlic to 1 tsp.