

MEDITERRANEAN FALAFEL BOWL

Yield: 8 portions (3-4 balls each)

Ingredients	Amounts
<i>Falafel Balls</i>	
Dried chickpeas	2 cups
Onion, chopped	2 cups
Parsley, chopped	2 cups
Cilantro, chopped	1 cup
Salt	2 tsp.
Crushed hot red pepper	½ tsp.
Garlic cloves, crushed	4 ea.
Cumin, ground	2 tsp.
Baking powder	1 tsp.
Extra virgin olive oil, for frying	1 quart
Orzo pasta, cooked, cooled, Tossed with 2 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil	2 cups
Cilantro, minced	¼ cup
Mint, minced	¼ cup
Lemon zest	1 Tbsp.
Salt and pepper	to taste
<i>Salad</i>	
Romain lettuce, ½ inch sliced	8 cups
Kalamata olives, pitted	2 cups
Pistachios, lightly toasted	1 cup
Pomegranate arils or seeds	2 cups
Persian cucumber, sliced thinly	4 ea.
Cherry Tomatoes, halved	2 pints
Pita Breads, cut into wedges	4 ea.
Extra virgin olive oil	¼ cup
Tahini sauce (recipe follows)	2 cups
Parsley, minced	1 Tbsp.
Sesame seeds, toasted	2 Tbsp.

Method

1. *For the Falafel Balls:* Place the chickpeas in a large bowl and add enough cold water to cover them by at least 2 inches; soak overnight and then drain.
2. Place the drained, uncooked chickpeas and the onions in the bowl of a food processor. Add the parsley, cilantro, salt, crushed hot pepper, garlic, and cumin. Process until blended but not puréed – it should look mealy.
3. Sprinkle in the baking powder, and pulse.

4. The dough should form a small ball when pressed and no longer sticks to your hands. Refrigerate, covered, for at least an hour or overnight.
5. Form the chickpea mixture into balls about the size of walnuts, using water to wet hands so the balls don't stick.
6. Heat 3 inches of oil to 375°F in a deep pot and fry 1 ball to test. Fry the balls until golden brown; drain on paper towels.
7. Toss the orzo pasta with the cilantro, mint, and lemon zest. Season with salt and pepper.
8. *For the Salad:* To plate the bowl, divide the salad ingredients into 8 bowls place 3 falafel on each bowl. Drizzle with tahini sauce and garnish with parsley and sesame seeds.