

Mediterranean White Bean Dip – Oil-Free

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Catherine Brown, Plant-based Chef, Culinary Nutritionist at @aseatatmytable.



When it comes to quick, economical, and nutritious party foods that are also DELICIOUS, you just can't beat legumes! Often this means hummus... but sometimes a girl just needs a break from chickpeas!

Cannelini beans (or white kidney beans) are a great option because they have a milder texture and flavor than chickpeas (or garbanzo beans) allowing you to take them in a number of flavor directions. [Cannellini beans](#) also contain more protein and Vitamin E than [chickpeas](#), and more than twice as much calcium per serving. That's good enough for me!

So why no oil? Isn't olive oil synonymous with Mediterranean cuisine.... and isn't it delicious?? Yes and YES! However, olive oil is also nutrient dense and processed, so it doesn't include any of the fiber from the original fruit. These calories can add up quickly and often without queing satiety (feeling full). In order to keep the calorie content down, I've omitted the customary dousing of oil but amped up the flavor using other ingredients. Trust me, you won't miss the oil! Plus, you can always garnish with a few whole olives if you like.

Let's get this party started, shall we??

Total Time: 50-55 minutes Prep Time: 10 minutes Bake Time: 40-45 minutes
to roast the garlic and lemons (this can be done ahead of time)

The flavors of this incredibly tasty dip hinge on two main ingredients: lemons and garlic, both roasted to mellow their sharpness and accentuate their sweetness. A few other ingredients harmonize to bring about a crescendo of flavors on your palate.

Here's the full line-up:

For about 3.5 cups of dip, you will need:

2 cans cannellini beans, 15 oz each (3 cups), drained and rinsed, reserve the fluid

1 large head of garlic

3 lemons, preferably Meyer (sweet!)

1 Tbsp maple syrup

1/4 cup tahini (optional, but recommended)

1/4 cup fortified nutritional yeast* (optional but recommended)

2 Tbsp toasted pine nuts, plus more for garnish, if desired (see note)

1/2 tsp smoked salt

1/2 tsp cumin, ground

1 packed Tbsp fresh rosemary, chopped, plus more for garnish, if desired (4-5 large sprigs)

*** Fortified nutritional yeast is a good source of B vitamins, including vitamin B12. Not all brands of nutritional yeast are fortified, so check the label carefully. Nutritional yeast also lends some body and flavor to this dip but is not absolutely necessary.**

NOTE: Undoubtedly, pine nuts are expensive. They are also intensely flavored, especially when toasted, which allows you to incorporate their delicious flavor using a lot less. Scope out the best bargain and store them in your freezer to maintain freshness. A few go a long way.

The Process:

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Slice a thin layer off the top of the head of garlic, exposing the tips of the bulbs. This makes it easier to squeeze the roasted garlic out from the top without causing blowouts from the bottom or sides. Save these garlic tips, but discard the skins. Wrap the head of garlic in foil and bake for 40-45 minutes until completely soft.

2. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Slice one lemon in 1/4 inch slices. Remove the seeds (in Meyer lemons the seeds tend to cluster in the center) and spread them out on the baking sheet. Brush both sides of each lemon with the maple syrup. Bake 20-30 minutes (alongside the garlic is fine) flipping them

half-way through. Watch them carefully during the final 5-10 minutes so they don't completely burn. You want them nicely caramelized and charred in a few spots. You can also do this on the grill. I chose the oven since it was already hot for roasting the garlic.

3. Zest the other two lemons and mince the zest finely, along with the rosemary. If you have a high-powered blender (like a [Vitamix](#)) you do not need to chop as finely. Otherwise, give both a fine chop so you end up with a smooth dip. This is especially important without oil to emulsify.

4. Once garlic and lemons are done, allow them to cool enough to handle. Open up the foil bundle for faster cooling. Cut a small piece off one of the lemon slices and taste (peel included). It should be slightly sweet, with just a bit of bitterness lingering. If it still tastes bitter, choose 3-4 of the prettiest slices for garnish and cut the rinds off the remaining pieces and just use the inner flesh in the next step. Both the garlic and lemons can be roasted several days in advance.

5. To your high-speed blender, add both cans of rinsed beans, squeeze the entire head of garlic into the blender (see note below), add the raw garlic tips, lemon zest and rosemary, roasted lemon slices or flesh (excluding those reserved for garnish), lemon juice from the zested lemons, tahini, toasted pinenuts, cumin, smoked salt and about 1/4 cup of the reserved bean liquid (or use water). Blend until completely smooth, scraping down sides and/or adding more reserved liquid or water if necessary.

NOTE: You can save the skins from the roasted garlic... yes, I know they're sticky, but the flavor still remaining is incredible! Put them in a ziplock bag and refrigerate up to five days or freeze up to three months. Pull them out the next time you need a quick, flavorful broth!

6. Garnish with roasted lemon slices, rosemary, toasted pinenuts, my [Lacto-Fermented Moroccan-Spiced Carrots, an assortment of olives, or any garnishes you like!](#)

Serve these alongside [crudite](#), my [Vegan Naan Bread](#), or my [Baked Tortilla Chips!](#)

Nutrition information is for 1/4 cup of dip without garnishes.

Nutrition Facts	
Servings: 12	
Amount per serving	
Calories	104
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 3.7g	5%
Saturated Fat 0.6g	3%
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 45mg	2%
Total Carbohydrate 14.6g	5%
Dietary Fiber 5.3g	19%
Total Sugars 1.9g	
Protein 5.7g	
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 66mg	5%
Iron 1mg	8%
Potassium 237mg	5%

*The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a food serving contributes to a daily diet. [2,000 calorie a day](#) is used for general nutrition advice.

Recipe analyzed by **verywell**

If you make this recipe, I'd love to hear how you and your family, friends or guests liked it!

Snap a photo and tag me too, #chefcatherinebrown. I love seeing what you make!

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