

## Crispy Bean & Herb Patties

ABOUT 15 PATTIES

### Falafel (fa-le-fill)

The aroma that fills the air while these crispy patties are being prepared will make you eager to bite into one. Offer them as an appetizer with tahini dip or in a pita wrap sandwich with chopped lettuce, tomato, radish, pickled turnips, and tahini sauce. Traditionally, skinless fava beans are combined with the garbanzos, but they vary so much from market to market that I have decided to leave them out.

**Specialty ingredients:** Tahini, found in specialty markets or online.

**Special equipment:** A food processor, and a candy/fry thermometer.

**Prepare ahead:** The raw patties can be frozen for several weeks. Freeze uncovered on a plastic-lined baking sheet, then transfer to an airtight container. Fry as directed without thawing. **Note:** The beans must soak overnight.

#### FOR THE FALAFEL

- 1 cup dry garbanzo beans (soak overnight)
- ½ teaspoon and ¼ teaspoon baking soda, divided
- 2 tablespoons coarsely chopped garlic
- ¼ cup coarsely chopped yellow onion
- ¼ cup coarsely chopped green onion
- ¼ cup coarsely chopped flat-leaf parsley; use green leafy parts and tender stems
- ¼ cup coarsely chopped cilantro; use green leafy parts and tender stems
- 1¼ teaspoons salt
- ¼ teaspoon coarsely ground black pepper
- ¼ teaspoon ground allspice
- ⅛ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- ¾ teaspoon ground coriander
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons raw sesame seeds (for topping)
- 2 cups canola oil (for frying)

#### FOR THE TAHINI SAUCE

1 recipe Tahini Sauce (see page 7)

#### To soak the beans for the falafel

Soak the beans in 4 cups water (so they are submerged) with ½ teaspoon baking soda overnight at room temperature, uncovered. (**Note:** The baking soda will soften the beans.)

#### To prepare the falafel (the following day)

Drain the beans. Place them on a kitchen towel and dry them well. Pat the vegetables dry to remove excess water (too much moisture in the mixture makes it difficult for the patties to hold together).

Place the beans in a food processor fitted with a metal blade. Add the garlic, both types of onion, the parsley, and the cilantro. (I use a 12-cup food processor; smaller ones may require processing one half at a time.) Pulse several times until the beans are coarsely chopped. Scrape down the sides, then slowly pulse and process until the beans are finely chopped (not pureed) and the mixture begins to hold together. (Test a small amount by squeezing it in the palm of your hand.)

Transfer the mixture to a bowl. Add the salt, spices, flour, and ¼ teaspoon baking soda, and mix well. Measuring the falafel mixture into 2-tablespoon por-



## APPETIZERS



tions, place each portion in your palm and press it into a 2-inch round dome-shaped patty (like a crab cake) using your other palm (or use a falafel mold; see below). Place the patty on a plastic-lined baking sheet, dome-side up. Repeat with the remaining portions. Sprinkle a few raw sesame seeds on top of each and gently press them into the patties with your finger. (Do not use toasted sesame seeds; they will not stick.)

### To make the tahini sauce

Follow the recipe and the procedure to prepare the tahini sauce as described on page 7.

### To fry the falafel

Heat the oil to 375°F in a small saucepan over medium-high heat (the oil should be about 1 inch deep). Use a candy/fry thermometer to measure the temperature of the oil for accuracy. Fry 5 patties at a time. Once they are golden brown, remove them with a slotted spoon to a paper towel-lined plate. Fry the remaining falafel. Make sure the temperature of the oil remains at 375°F so the patties fry evenly.

**Recycle the oil:** See page xiv.

### To serve

Serve with warm pita bread and tahini sauce on the side. Offer with Pickled Turnips (page 17) to kick up the flavors.

## Falafel molds

Handheld molds can be found in specialty markets or online. They consist of two pieces: a small circular mold attached to a spring-loaded handle, and a flat paddle. Hold the lever down on the handle as you fill the mold with the falafel mixture. Pack it down into the mold using the paddle as you press the mixture into a dome-shaped patty. Gently release the lever and transfer the patty to a plastic-lined tray. If you plan on making falafel often, it is worth purchasing one of these. The final number of patties may vary based on the size of the mold you use. Try to find one that is about 2 inches in diameter.

