

Eggplant and Kashk Dip from Food of Life, Ancient and Modern Iranian Cooking

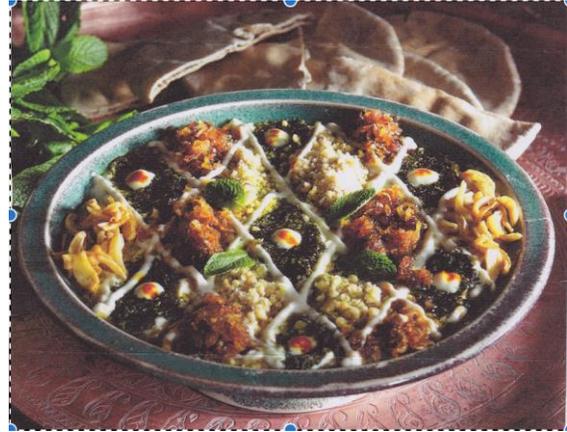
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Ingredients

- 3 lbs. large eggplants
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 2 large onions, peeled and thinly sliced
- 4 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 tsp. turmeric
- 1 Tbs. dried mint flakes crushed
- 1 ½ tsp. sea salt
- 1 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- ½ cup walnuts or pistachios, powdered in a blender or food processor
- ½ cup liquid kashk*

Garnish Ingredients

- ½ cup toasted walnuts
- ¼ cup oil
- 2 large onions, peeled and thinly sliced
- 4 garlic cloves, peeled and thinly sliced
- 1/2 tsp. turmeric
- 2 Tbs. dried mint flakes, crushed
- 2 Tbs. liquid kashk
- ½ cup fresh mint or tarragon leaves
- Lavash or flat bread for serving



Directions

1. To cook the eggplant: Preheat the oven to 400°. Rinse the eggplants and prick in several places with a fork to prevent bursting. Place them on a rack on a rimmed baking sheet and bake in the oven for 1 hour. Allow them to cool. Peel the eggplants, place on a cutting board, and finely chop.

2. Heat 2 Tbs. oil in a wide deep skillet, add the onion and garlic, and saute until golden brown. Add turmeric, crushed mint flakes, salt, pepper, walnuts and roasted eggplants. Stir well. Add the kashk and mash until pureed. If making ahead, refrigerate, and bring to room temperature before garnishing.

To prepare garnish:

1. Walnuts: Roast the walnuts in a preheated 350° oven on a baking sheet for 10 minutes. Watch carefully as they burn quickly. Use a food processor to pulse until powdered.
2. Onions: heat 2 Tbs. oil over medium heat and fry the onion until golden brown. Remove onion with a slotted spoon and set aside.
3. Garlic: Add the garlic to the skillet and fry until golden brown. Remove with a slotted spoon and reserve.
4. Now add turmeric to the oil and remove from heat. Add the crushed mint flakes and allow to cool.

To serve: Transfer the dip to a serving plate and garnish with kashk and the rest of the garnish.

*Kashk is a yogurt-based product used in many Iranian and middle-eastern recipes. Recipes or the product can be found online or in middle-eastern grocery stores Plain yogurt or sour cream may be substituted.