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# Medieval Hummus

Recipe from [Lucien Zayan](#)Adapted by [Ligaya Mishan](#)

Chris Simpson for The New York Times. Food stylist: Maggie Ruggiero. Prop stylist: Sophia Pappas.

**Time** 30 minutes**Rating** 3 ★★★★★ (24)**Notes** [Read community notes](#) ↕

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The roots of this recipe, an ancestor of [modern hummus](#), date back at least as far as the 13th century, as the Iraqi food historian Nawal Nasrallah [writes](#) on her blog, My Iraqi Kitchen. As adapted by Lucien Zayan, a Frenchman of Egyptian and Syrian descent who runs the [Invisible Dog Art Center](#) in Brooklyn, you boil chickpeas until their skins loosen and they reveal themselves, tender little hulks with souls of butter. Then you mash them in a swirl of tahini, olive oil, vinegar, spices and herbs, and fold in a crush of nuts, seeds and preserved lemon, sour-bright and tasting of aged sun. Notably absent from the recipe is garlic. Here, instead, the nuts — Mr. Zayan uses hazelnuts, for more butteriness, and pistachios, with their hint of camphor — fortify the chickpeas in their earthy heft, so close to the richness of meat. —**Ligaya Mishan**

## INGREDIENTS

**Yield:** About 4½ cups

## PREPARATION

### Step 1

⅓ cup raw hazelnuts

1½ tablespoons caraway seeds

1 tablespoon coriander seeds

1½ teaspoons sesame seeds

¼ cup shelled roasted unsalted pistachios

5 mint leaves

1 small sprig tarragon, leaves only

3½ cups cooked drained chickpeas (homemade from 8 ounces dried chickpeas or from two 15-ounce cans chickpeas)

½ cup tahini

¼ cup olive oil, plus more for drizzling

2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice, plus more to taste (see Tip)

½ tablespoon ground sumac, plus more for sprinkling

1½ teaspoons rice vinegar

Salt

½ cup ice-cold water

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In a small skillet over medium-low heat, toast the hazelnuts, stirring occasionally, until fragrant and the skins begin to split, 3 to 4 minutes, then transfer to a plate lined with a paper towel. When cool, gently rub off the skins and discard.

### Step 2

Using the same pan, toast the caraway, coriander and sesame seeds, stirring occasionally, until fragrant, about 2 minutes, then remove from heat to cool slightly (the seeds will continue to toast).

### Step 3

Add the toasted hazelnuts and the pistachios to a food processor and pulse until they release their oils and make a compact paste, 3 to 4 minutes. Add the mint and tarragon and pulse to combine.

### Step 4

Add the chickpeas to the mixture in the food processor, reserving a handful for garnish. Then add the tahini, olive oil, lemon juice, the toasted seeds, sumac, rice vinegar and a pinch of salt. Start pulsing and gradually add the ice water, splash by splash, until creamy and smooth. Taste and add more lemon juice or salt, as desired.

### Step 5

Spoon the hummus onto a plate. (If you like, use a piping bag and experiment with different tips for an artful presentation.) Drizzle with olive oil, dust with sumac and finish with a few chickpeas on top.

### TIP

*Instead of lemon juice, Lucien Zayan uses half of a preserved lemon (preferably made with minimal salt) and adds a splash of its liquid along with the ice water.*

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