



Muhammara (Syrian Roasted Red Pepper Dip with Toasted Walnuts, Garlic, and Pomegranate Syrup)

Ingredients:

!Dip

1 ½ pounds fresh red bell peppers (about 3 medium size), OR
One 24-ounce jar roasted red bell peppers (you will need 1 1/2 cups, without the liquid)

3 ¼ cups walnut halves

6 medium cloves garlic, peeled

1 tablespoon room temperature water

2 tablespoons unsalted tomato paste

1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil

1 tablespoon walnut oil

1 tablespoon pomegranate syrup

1 ½ teaspoons ground cumin

3/8 teaspoon ground fenugreek, optional

1 ¼ teaspoons kosher salt (if using fresh peppers), or to taste (if using roasted peppers from a jar)

!Garnish

Extra virgin olive or walnut oil

Crushed, toasted walnuts

Peasant bread, sour dough bread, or other thick and crusty white bread

Directions:

If using peppers from the jar, skip down to step #2. If using fresh peppers,

rinse thoroughly under cold water. Preheat the broiler (on “Hi” if using an electric oven). Rub olive oil and a little salt all around each pepper and place on a baking sheet or small baking pan. Set pan under the broiler for about 12 to 15 minutes (skins should start to blacken and wilt), then turn the peppers over and broil the other side an additional 10 to 15 minutes. Keep turning and rotating the peppers until all sides blister. (Note: It is good if they turn black as you will peel these thin skins off, and the char will give a smoky flavor). Remove from the broiler and let cool until lukewarm. Peel the thin skin from each pepper and discard.

If using peppers from the jar, drain liquid and place into a small bowl. Cover with cold water and soak the peppers, 1 to 2 hours, changing the water frequently to flush out the excess salt and vinegar.

Drain well.

Place the walnuts into a large skillet and begin to brown them over a high heat for about 2 minutes.

Lower to a medium heat and shaking the pan frequently to prevent burning, continue to dry-roast the walnuts until dark brown on all sides, about 12 to 15 minutes. Remove from heat and pour onto a large plate or baking pan to cool completely to room temperature, setting aside $\frac{1}{4}$ cup for the garnish when serving.

Pour roasted and peeled peppers, the 3 cups of toasted walnuts, garlic cloves, and water into a food processor and pulse to combine.

Add the tomato paste, olive oil, pomegranate syrup, cumin, and fenugreek (if desired) and process until very smooth and creamy, about 3 to 5 minutes.

Taste and add the $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon of salt (if using freshly roasted peppers) or to taste (if necessary when using the jarred peppers).

Serve at room temperature drizzled with olive or walnut oil, pomegranate syrup, the extra $\frac{1}{4}$ toasted walnuts, and a thick, crusty white bread on the side.