

Butternut Dip - <http://www.ottolenghi.co.uk/butternut-squash-tahini-spread-shop>

Date Syrup - <http://simpleveganblog.com/date-syrup/>

Butternut squash & tahini spread

(p 69, Jerusalem)

Serves 6-8

Serve as a starter with bread or as part of a mezze selection.

1 very large butternut squash/pumpkin (about 1.2kg), peeled and cut into chunks (970g in total once peeled)

3 tbsp olive oil

1 tsp ground cinnamon

½ tsp salt

70g light tahini paste

120g Greek yoghurt

2 small garlic cloves, crushed

1 tsp mixed black and white sesame seeds (or just white, if you don't have black)

1 1/2 tsp date syrup

2 tbsp chopped coriander (optional)

salt

Method

1. Preheat oven to 180°C.
2. Spread squash/pumpkin in medium roasting tin. Pour olive oil over, sprinkle with cinnamon and ½ tsp salt. Mix, cover with foil.
3. Roast ~70 minutes, stirring once. Remove from oven and cool.
4. Put cooled mixture into processor with tahini, yoghurt & garlic.
5. Roughly pulse to a coarse, not smooth, paste. (Can use masher or hands if no processor.)
6. Spread in a wavy pattern over a flat plate and sprinkle with sesame seeds. Drizzle over the date syrup and finish with coriander.

RAW DATE SYRUP

Date syrup is a popular natural sweetener with wonderful richness and treacly depth. Use it for salad and vegetable dressings, to sweeten stews or just drizzle over porridge in the morning. It is available from health food shops and Middle Eastern grocers but can be substituted with golden syrup, maple syrup or even treacle. (Ottolenghi)

1 cup dried dates

1 ½ cup water

1 tsp lemon juice

1. Place the dates in a small bowl; cover with warm water and let sit for 30 minutes.
2. Add the dates, soaking water and lemon juice to food processor or blender.
3. Blend for 45-60 seconds, or until smooth.
4. Transfer to an air tight container and store in the refrigerator for up to two weeks.

Yield: 1 1/3 cups