The swap: Store-bought hummus → Homemade roasted garlic & harissa

Roasted Garlic Harissa Hummus

By Angie Hayman

Creamy roasted garlic hummus gets a spicy little attitude adjustment with harissa! Made with chickpeas, tahini, fresh lemon, and bold seasonings, this homemade dip brings big flavor without the store-bought price tag.



PREP	COOK	TOTAL	SERVINGS	DIFFICULTY	CALORIES
15 min	20-25	~40 min	16	Easy	~75 est. per serving

Dips & Spreads · Mediterranean-Inspired · Vegan · Vegetarian · Dairy-Free · Gluten-Free · Plant-Based

Approximate Nutrition

Estimated

Per serving (2 tablespoons)

~75	~2.5g	~7g	~4.5g	~2g	~1g	~90mg
CALORIES	PROTEIN	CARBS	FAT	FIBER	SUGAR	SODIUM

Nutrition information is an approximation and may vary depending on the brands and products used, exact ingredient quantities, and portion sizes.

Ingredients

Makes 16 · 2 tablespoons

- [ ] **2 cups** cooked chickpeas
- [ ] **1 whole** head garlic
- [ ] **1 teaspoon** olive oil, for roasting garlic
- [ ] **¼ cup** tahini
- [ ] **3 tablespoons** fresh lemon juice
- [ ] **1 tablespoon** extra virgin olive oil
- [ ] **1 tablespoon** harissa
- [ ] **1 teaspoon** ground cumin
- [ ] **½ teaspoon** smoked paprika
- [ ] **½ teaspoon** salt
- [ ] **3 tablespoons** ice-cold water, plus additional as needed

Ingredient note: I used dried chickpeas that I soaked overnight and cooked until very soft. Canned chickpeas work too! Just drain, rinse, and cook them a little longer if needed for a softer texture. For the garlic, roast the entire head until the cloves are golden and soft enough to squeeze right out of their skins. Harissa brands vary in heat, so start with a little less if you're sensitive to spice. I used 1 tablespoon for a gentle kick that doesn't overpower the roasted garlic. Ice-cold water helps loosen the hummus and makes it easier to blend. Add a little at a time until you reach your favorite consistency.

Instructions

1. ### Prepare the Chickpeas
   If using dried chickpeas, soak overnight, drain, and cook in fresh water until very soft. Drain and measure 2 cups of cooked chickpeas. If using canned chickpeas, drain and rinse, then simmer until extra tender for easier blending.

2. ### Roast the Garlic
   Slice the top off a whole head of garlic to expose the cloves. Drizzle with approximately 1 teaspoon olive oil and wrap in aluminum foil. Air fry at 350°F for 20–25 minutes, until the garlic is golden, soft, and fragrant. Allow to cool enough to handle, then squeeze the cloves out of their skins.

3. ### Build the Flavor Base
   In a deep blending container, combine ¼ cup tahini, 3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice, 1 tablespoon olive oil, and 3 tablespoons ice-cold water. Add the roasted garlic cloves and blend until combined.

4. ### Add the Chickpeas and Seasonings
   Add the 2 cups cooked chickpeas, 1 teaspoon cumin, and ½ teaspoon smoked paprika. Blend with an immersion blender, moving it around the container to incorporate everything evenly. Add a little more cold water as needed to loosen the mixture.

5. ### Bring on the Harissa
   Add 1 tablespoon harissa and ½ teaspoon salt. Blend again until the harissa is evenly distributed

and the hummus reaches your preferred consistency.

6 **Taste and Serve**

Taste and adjust the seasoning if needed. Spoon into a serving bowl, smooth the top, and serve with fresh vegetables, pita, crackers, or your favorite charcuterie board goodies.

> **Calorie Hacker Tip:** Don't skip cooking the chickpeas until they're really soft. Tender chickpeas make blending much easier, especially when you're using an immersion blender instead of a food processor.

Less Oil. More Attitude.

The Calorie Hack

Who decided hummus had to be boring? Not in my kitchen! I roasted an entire head of garlic until it was soft and sweet, then brought in harissa for a little kick. The result is a creamy, boldly seasoned hummus that doesn't need to swim in olive oil to taste amazing. A little heat, a lot of garlic, and absolutely no apologies.

Traditional approach	Our Calorie Hack
~~Generous added olive oil~~	✓ **Just 1 tablespoon of olive oil**
~~Extra oil for flavor~~	✓ **Roasted garlic, harissa, lemon juice, and spices**

Why it works

- Roasting garlic transforms its sharp bite into a mellow, almost buttery sweetness. Harissa brings warmth, depth, and a little heat, while tahini adds richness and lemon keeps everything bright. Using cold water to help blend the hummus means we can create a creamy texture without pouring in extra olive oil.
- The trick isn't removing everything that makes hummus delicious. It's making every ingredient earn its spot.

Make It a Meal

One serving: ~75 cal

Hummus isn't just for dipping a sad baby carrot into. This roasted garlic harissa hummus has enough personality to be the star of lunch! Spread it, scoop it, or build an entire meal around it. A little protein, some crunchy vegetables, and you've got something seriously satisfying.

- **Fresh veggie platter +~50 cal**
  Cucumber, bell peppers, carrots, and cherry tomatoes
- **Warm whole-wheat pita +~170 cal**
  One medium pita, warmed and cut into wedges

- **Grilled chicken breast +~165 cal**
  3 ounces of seasoned grilled chicken
- **Mediterranean chopped salad +~100 cal**
  Tomatoes, cucumber, red onion, parsley, and lemon dressing
- **Hard-boiled eggs +~140 cal**
  Two eggs with a sprinkle of smoked paprika

Illustrative estimates. Actual calories depend on portions, ingredients, and dressing.

Angie's Kitchen Notes

What we learned making it

1. ****Don't underestimate the salt:** My first taste was good, but something was missing. A little more salt brought everything together. Start small, taste, and adjust. Your taste buds get a vote!**
2. ****Roast that whole head of garlic:** Yes, the WHOLE thing. Roasting mellows the sharpness and brings out a wonderful sweetness. You get loads of garlic flavor without feeling like you could ward off vampires from three counties away.**
3. ****Harissa was the missing personality:** The roasted garlic gave us a delicious base, but the harissa brought the warmth and depth I was looking for. We ended up using a full tablespoon, and it made all the difference.**
4. ****An immersion blender can absolutely do the job:** I made mine with an immersion blender, but a food processor or regular blender works too. Add cold water gradually to help everything blend into a creamy dip.**
5. ****Don't rush the chickpeas:** Whether you're cooking dried chickpeas like I did or using canned ones, make sure they're nice and soft before blending. Softer chickpeas make smoother hummus.**
6. ****Taste before you call it finished:** This recipe didn't get its final flavor on the first try. That's what testing is for! A little adjustment here, another taste there, and suddenly you've got a keeper.**

Storage & Reheating

- **Refrigerator:** Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 4 days.
- **Freezer:** Freeze in a freezer-safe, airtight container for up to 2 months for best quality. Leave a little room for expansion and thaw overnight in the refrigerator.
- **Reheating:** No reheating needed! Serve chilled or let it sit at room temperature briefly before serving. Give it a good stir if any liquid separates.
- **Food safety:** Refrigerate promptly after preparing. Do not leave hummus at room temperature for more than 2 hours, or 1 hour if temperatures are above 90°F. Always use a clean utensil when serving.

Leftover safety, the USDA way: Refrigerate within 2 hours · Enjoy within 3–4 days · Freeze for up to 3–4 months · Reheat to 165°F. USDA: Leftovers and Food Safety: fsis.usda.gov

Hack It Again

Cook once, eat twice

Turn the leftovers into tomorrow's lunch. Less waste, less money, less thinking.

- **Sandwich upgrade**
  Spread hummus on whole-grain bread instead of mayo, then pile on turkey and crunchy vegetables
- **Hummus toast**
  Spread over toasted sourdough and top with a soft-boiled egg and sliced tomatoes
- **Creamy pasta sauce**
  Thin hummus with warm pasta water and toss with pasta, spinach, and roasted vegetables
- **Loaded baked potato**
  Spoon hummus over a baked potato with sautéed peppers and onions
- **Quick salad dressing**
  Whisk hummus with lemon juice and water until pourable, then drizzle over greens or grain bowls

Real Food. Simple Swaps. Healthier Plates.

Rate this recipe and find more simple swaps at thecaloriehacker.com