

## **BRYANNA'S QUICK AND EASY LOW-FAT FELAFEL WITH CREAMY TOFU/TAHINI MINT SAUCE**

This is a "cheat" recipe-- it uses a mix! But it's worth it if, like me, you rarely eat felafel because of the oil involved. There is an excellent felafel mix made by a Lebanese company, Cedar, that I like. However, if you can't find it, it seems that there are any number of Middle Eastern brands out there. **Use one that just soaks in water for an hour before cooking.** All you do with these mixes is add water and let it stand for an hour. Then you form the mix into patties and fry. The trouble is, I'd rather not fry if I don't have to! So, I found a way to enjoy these without the oil-- steaming them, and then oven-frying! *(Unfortunately, I don't have the nutritional analysis for these.)* The steaming cooks them thoroughly and makes them moist inside. Not quite as good as fried, but almost!

1 box or package of your favorite felafel (falafel) mix (*whatever brand you like-- I'm not crazy about the Fantastic Foods brand*)  
water (the amount instructed on the box or package)

### **Creamy Tofu/Tahini Mint Sauce:**

2/3 cup (5.25 oz.) firm or extra-firm SILKEN tofu  
1/4 cup lemon juice  
2 tablespoons tahini  
1/2 teaspoon crumbled dried mint (or 1 tablespoon fresh, chopped)  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1 pinch sugar

Mix the felafel mix and water in a large bowl. Let stand for an hour (it can sit longer).

### **While the mixture stands, make the Sauce.**

Mix the sauce ingredients until VERY smooth in A blender or food processor. Scoop the sauce into a serving bowl, cover, and refrigerate until serving time.

### **When the mixture has soaked for an hour or more:**

Make small patties out of the mixture (these are easier to cook than balls). Place the patties, not touching, on oiled steaming plates or baskets, with small holes in them, not grates. You can use collapsible metal steamers.

Chinese aluminum or bamboo steaming baskets can be used. If using bamboo baskets, line them with cooking parchment with holes punched in it with a bamboo skewer.

***If you have no streaming apparatus,*** place the patties on dinner plates lined with cooking parchment. The plate can be balanced on two chopsticks placed across the inside of a wok or stir-fry pan (or 4 chopsticks, "tic-tac-toe" style). (You'll have to steam one plate at a time.) Cover with the domed wok lid while steaming.

You can improvise a steamer using a large pot with a tight lid. An electric frying pan with a domed lid also makes a good steamer. The lid should be 1 to 2" above the food so that the steam can circulate around the food. To hold the food above the water, you can use cans with the ends removed or scrunched up aluminum foil. The food should be supported at least 2" above the simmering water.

Steam the patties over barely boiling water, covered, for 10 minutes. You can do this ahead of time and then oven-fry them later, if you like.

Let the patties cool until they are easier to handle. In the meantime, heat the oven to 500°F.

Place the patties on dark cookie sheets (they brown better than shiny ones) sprayed or brushed lightly with olive oil. Spray or brush the tops with oil, too. Bake for 5 minutes, or until the bottoms are crispy and golden-brown. Flip them over gently and bake for 3-5 minutes more, to brown the other side.

Serve immediately with the Sauce.