

Yogurt-Cucumber Sauce

Active Time: 10 Minutes

Total Time: 4 Hours 10 Minutes

Makes: about 2 1/2 cups

Serving : 2 tablespoons

Traditionally, made from thick, rich goat's milk yogurt, this tangy sauce is Greek in origin. For a similar consistency with cow's milk yogurt, you must first drain it of excess water. The sauce is delicious served with fried eggplant and zucchini, lamb chops or meatballs, or as a dip for pita bread. It is pretty darn good with fried dill pickles too. I always leave out the mint except when serving with lamb.

INGREDIENTS

4 cups (32 oz) plain yogurt

1 large cucumber, seeded and coarsely grated

Salt

3 large cloves garlic, finely minced

1 tablespoon red wine vinegar or fresh lemon juice, or to taste (we use both)

3 tablespoons olive oil

1/4 cup chopped fresh mint or equal amounts chopped fresh mint and flat-leaf (Italian) parsley

Freshly ground pepper

DIRECTIONS

Line a large sieve with cheesecloth, place it over a bowl and spoon the yogurt into the sieve. Refrigerate for 4-6 hours to drain the excess water from the yogurt. You should have 1 1/2 to 2 cups drained yogurt. Refrigerate until needed. Place the grated cucumber in a sieve or colander, salt it lightly and toss to mix. Let stand for 30 minutes to draw out the excess moisture.

In a bowl, combine the drained yogurt, garlic, vinegar or lemon juice and olive oil and stir to mix well.

Using a kitchen towel, squeeze the drained cucumber dry. Fold the cucumber into the yogurt mixture and then stir in the mint and/or parsley. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Serve immediately, or cover and refrigerate overnight.

Bring to room temperature before serving.