

Health Dips

Homemade Dips can be a lot healthier than their store-bought cousins, which are often high in fat, sodium and calories. Here are some ideas:

- Make skinny dips by simply using non-fat or low-fat versions of any cheeses (cottage cheese, cream cheese) or mayonnaise.
- Use high-nutrition bases for your dips—like beans (chickpeas, kidney, pinto, black or white beans all work well), spinach, avocado, tomato or soft tofu.
- Instead of salt, season your dips with plenty of high-antioxidant spices and herbs such as curry powder, garlic, thyme and oregano. For sweet dips, try cloves and cinnamon.
- To enhance flavors, add a dash of tamari, lemon or lime instead of salt.
- Try using yogurt instead of sour cream in your recipes. You can ease into the transition by replacing just half of the sour cream with yogurt to start.
- Add finely chopped vegetables to your dips—like carrots, red, green and yellow peppers, celery, broccoli and whole peas. They add nutrition, color and flavor.
- Serve dips with bite-sized pieces of raw vegetables—smaller pieces mean less dipping (and no double-dipping).
- Fill up on fiber. Use wholegrain breads and crackers, and avoid high-fat chips and snacks made with refined flours.



Why Buy Bulk Spices?

Want the freshest spices along with the most flexibility and fun while shopping? Then buying in bulk is for you. Comparison shop for a few spices, and you'll see why bulk is your best choice:

> Price

You'll pay from three to 10 times more for the same amount of spice if you buy it in bottles instead of in bulk! (You—and the environment—have to pay for all those jars and labels, after all.)

> Freshness

As you measure your spices from the bulk jars, relish the aroma, color and texture of each. You know that these spices are fresh because the stock is updated often. They're bright, not faded, richly aromatic, not faint. Your senses can't judge the color or aroma of prepackaged spices, because they're hidden away.

> Versatility

Whether you're stocking up on your favorite cooking staples or just buying a pinch of this or that for a particular recipe, when you buy in bulk, you'll always have the right amount. You don't have to buy an entire package of that exotic spice you'll use only once a year, and you don't have to purchase multiple packages of a basic pickling spice to last through canning season.

> Fun

With bulk spices, you can decide to buy a smidgen of something that strikes your fancy just for fun (chances are there will be plenty of enticing choices). Once home, you'll enjoy replenishing your spice jars, and you'll look forward to cooking with these wonderful, fresh seasonings. Shopping for bulk spices is an all-around satisfying experience!

EXPERT TIPS & INFORMATION
ON USING BULK SPICES

15 DELECTABLE
DIPS



Delectable Dips

Recipes for ...

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- > Spicy Flatbread
- > Coriander Fruit Dip

... and Tip and Tidbits
About Dips

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Tips and Tidbits About Dips

- For party pizzazz, think of alternative bowls for your dip, like kale or cabbage leaves; a round, scooped-out sourdough or swirled rye loaf; or hollowed green, red, and yellow sweet peppers.
- What to dip with? An assortment of veggies is always fun, but to add interest be sure to vary the color and the usual variety. Why not offer kohlrabi or artichoke hearts alongside the classic carrots and cauliflower or papaya and kiwi with those apples? Vary your chip assortment, too. Offer something your guests may not have tried lately, like sweet potato, blue corn, or hot sesame chips. A variety of breads (including breadsticks, crackers and pretzels) and cheese cubes (everything from a rather subtle brick with a spicy dip to a hot pepper jack with a creamy, mild dip) make for substantial dipping.
- It's usually a good idea to make dips ahead of time, to allow the flavors to meld. Some are best served warm or at room temperature, others chilled. When in doubt, serve dairy-based products straight out of the refrigerator.
- Once you're accustomed to making dips, you'll find that you can just wing it. Simply start with any good base (sour cream, yogurt, cream cheese and other soft cheese, homemade mayo, mashed beans or veggies, for example). Add a squirt or two of lemon juice, lime juice, or balsamic or wine vinegar, or, for a sweet dip, honey. Then make your dip unique with your own spice combos—savory, garlic and cumin in the bean dip; thyme, basil and chives for the seafood; and mint, cinnamon, and nutmeg for the fruit, for example. Add a few surprises, like sundried tomatoes or chili peppers.
- For quick results, keep a good supply of spice blends on hand. Curry powder, Garam Masala, Italian Seasoning, Taco Seasoning, and Pumpkin Pie Spice are just a few possibilities.
- Enliven your classic fondue with a generous helping of spices—nutmeg and allspice with Gruyere, garlic and tarragon with Swiss, thyme and rosemary to complement the white wine.

Delectable Dips

What's in the dip? Thanks to your way with spices, guests will wonder what makes your dips so delicious and distinctive. Here are a handful of specific recipes, as well as a few tips to help you whip up your very own version of the ultimate party food.

Eggplant Dip

Enjoy this dip with breadsticks or wheat crackers, or try it as a spread on sandwiches.

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| 1 large eggplant | 1 teaspoon oregano leaf |
| 3 tablespoons olive oil | ¼ teaspoon garlic granules |
| 1 cup chopped red onion | ¼ teaspoon black pepper, coarse grind salt to taste |
| ½ cup chopped green pepper | ⅓ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese |
| ½ cup tomato sauce | |
| 1 teaspoon basil leaf | |

Preheat oven to 400°F.

Slice the eggplant in half lengthwise and brush with 1 tablespoon of the olive oil. Place on a baking sheet, cut sides up, and bake until tender, about 45 minutes. Set aside to cool. Meanwhile, sauté onion and pepper in the remaining olive oil.

Scoop out the eggplant flesh and discard the skins.

In a food processor or blender, combine until smooth the eggplant, sautéed vegetables, tomato sauce, and spices. Serve warm, sprinkled with Parmesan. Makes about 2 cups.

Spicy Flatbread

These homemade wedges make dipping irresistible. You can make them well ahead of time and store, once cooled, in a covered container.

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| 6 slices pita bread (make or buy a variety that will open into pockets) | 1 tablespoon poppy seeds |
| 3 tablespoons toasted sesame seeds | 1 tablespoon oregano leaf |
| 1 tablespoon thyme leaf | ½ teaspoon garlic powder |
| | 1 cup olive oil or melted butter or soy spread |

Slice the pita bread in half, and then slice it open, so it lies flat. Combine remaining ingredients and brush on cut sides of the pita. Cut the pita in wedges.

Place the wedges, cut sides up, on a baking sheet and bake at 300°F until lightly browned and crisp. Remove from the sheet to cool. Makes enough to serve about 4 people.



Creamy Cрудité Dip

This mild dip partners well with assertive veggies and spicy breads (like flatbread wedges). For a dip with more kick, add a tablespoon of prepared horseradish.

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| 4 ounces cream cheese | 1 teaspoon thyme leaf |
| ½ cup cottage cheese | ¼ teaspoon mustard powder |
| 1 tablespoon parsley leaf flakes | ⅛ teaspoon fine grind white pepper |
| 1 teaspoon dill weed | |

Simply combine all ingredients together in a food processor or blender. Chill for several hours before serving. Makes about 1 cup.

Almond Hummus

Yes, chickpeas already have a nutty taste, but the addition of almonds gives this dip a deliciously different spin. Chips and breads are good dippers for hummus. And of course it makes a tasty sandwich spread. (For appetizers, you might make open-face hummus tea sandwiches topped with a halved cherry tomato.)

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| 1 cup cooked chickpeas | 1 tablespoon parsley leaf flakes |
| ½ cup tahini | ⅛ teaspoon cayenne |
| 2 tablespoon olive oil | dash of tamari |
| 1 teaspoon garlic granules | salt and coarse-grind black pepper to taste |
| ¼ cup water | |

Combine all ingredients in a food processor or blender until smooth. Serve at room temperature or cool. Makes about 1 ¼ cup.

Coriander Fruit Dip

Serve this sweet spiced dip with any fruit. Or plopp a dollop of it over a serving-sized bowl of red and green grapes.

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| 8 ounces cream cheese | ¼ teaspoon cinnamon powder |
| ¼ cup plain yogurt | ⅛ teaspoon nutmeg ground |
| 2 tablespoons honey | |
| ¼ teaspoon coriander seed powder | |

Combine all ingredients in a food processor or blender until smooth. Serve chilled. Makes about 1 ½ cup.



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