

## EPICUREAN ESSENTIALS

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### Baba Ghanouj

- mesquite chips, soaked 1 hour
- 6 small eggplant
- 1 large clove garlic
- 1 lemon, juiced
- 1/4 c. tahini
- water, as needed

Prepare the eggplant: If smoking over coals, prepare charcoal. If smoking over a gas grill, heat to medium - medium-high heat. If roasting, heat oven to 350 degrees F. If smoking, place soaked mesquite chips over heat source just prior to placing eggplant on grill. Slice eggplant in half lengthwise and place on prepared grill or in pre-heated oven and cook for approximately 30-40 minutes or until the eggplant is completely tender. At this point, you can continue with the recipe or store cooked eggplant and resume the next day.

Prepare the dip: Place the garlic in the dry clean bowl of a food processor and mince. Scoop eggplant from the skin and add to food processor. Add lemon juice and tahini. Process until smooth. If the mixture is too thick add a bit of water to achieve desired thickness. Taste and adjust seasoning with salt if necessary.

Serve room temperature with toasted pita, olives and veggie sticks. The day I made this baba, I had purchased some baby bell peppers at the farmers' market and decided to turn them into an appetizer presentation.

Yield: about 2 cups of dip