

Almond Feta Cheese with Herb Oil

MAKES 10oz ROUND

Ingredients:

- 1 cup whole blanched almonds (Use another nut like macadamia or cashew if allergic to almonds)
- ¼ cup lemon juice
- 3 Tbs. plus ¼ cup olive oil, divided
- 1 clove garlic, peeled
- 1¼ tsp. salt
- 1 Tbs. fresh thyme leaves
- 1 tsp. fresh rosemary leaves

Notes:

Blanched almonds give this creamy-crumbly cheese a rich texture. Unbaked, it will be smooth and spreadable. Baking will make it a bit more crumbly, like traditional feta cheese.

Source:

April 2009; <http://www.vegetariantimes.com/recipe/almond-feta-cheese-with-herb-oil/>

Modifications in red by Laura McKay

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Directions:

1. Place almonds in medium bowl, and cover with 3 inches cold water. Let soak 24 hours. Drain soaking liquid, rinse almonds under cold running water, and drain again.
2. Purée almonds, lemon juice, 3 Tbs. oil, garlic, salt, and 1/2 cup cold water in food processor 6 minutes, or until very smooth and creamy.
3. Place large strainer over bowl, and line with triple layer of cheesecloth. Spoon almond mixture into cheesecloth. Bring corners and sides of cloth together, and twist around cheese, forming into orange-size ball and squeezing to help extract moisture. Secure with rubber band or kitchen twine. Chill 12 hours, or overnight. Discard excess liquid.
4. Preheat oven to 200°F. Line baking sheet with parchment paper. Unwrap cheese (it will be soft), and transfer from cheesecloth to prepared baking sheet. Flatten to form 6-inch round about 3/4-inch thick. Bake 40 minutes, or until top is slightly firm. Cool, then chill. (Cheese can be made up to this point 2 days ahead; keep refrigerated.)
5. Combine remaining 1/4 cup oil, thyme, and rosemary in small saucepan. Warm oil over medium-low heat 2 minutes, or until very hot but not simmering. Cool to room temperature. Drizzle herb oil over cheese just before serving.



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