**Baba Ghanouj**

**video link: watch Chef Beth at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tb3V2FVo3QM&t=123s**

Serves: 6-8

Recipe by: Beth

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1 large or 2 small Eggplant- halved and salted

1 Head of Garlic- topped and wrapped in foil

½ c. Tahini  + more to taste

Salt and Pepper

Lemon juice

Good olive oil- a splash

Cayenne- a dash

Cumin (optional)

Smoked Paprika (optional)

Sumac (optional)

Parsley for garnish

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Baba ganouj is similar to hummus, but is made with grilled or roasted eggplant instead of chickpeas. Both are Middle Eastern and often served together with pita bread and raw, crisp veggies. You can use baba ghanouj like you would hummus—as a dip or spread. You can grill the eggplant and it will give it a nice smoky flavor but it’s just as easy to roast halved eggplants, cut-side down, in a 400º oven for about 30 mins.

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Trim the top off a head of garlic, splash on some olive oil, wrap it in foil and roast it in the same pan with your eggplant. You can also prick the eggplant with a fork to allow steam to release while cooking. Remove it from the oven when it’s starting to sag. Scoop out the flesh into a bowl or strainer. Pour or strain off any excess liquid.

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Squish the garlic cloves out of their skins. Mash around a bit with a fork and some salt before adding to the bowl, especially if it isn’t really soft. Add juice of half the lemon. Add 3-4 tbsp Tahini. Stir everything together with a whisk or a fork. You want it to be creamy. Don’t skimp on the salt. It also helps to counter any bitterness in the eggplant. You can add cumin if you like it, a few grinds of pepper, a pinch of cayenne and a dash or two of smoky paprika.

You can add more Tahini if you want, more lemon juice and salt. It tastes better after it has sat for a few hours as room temp. Garnish with a splash of good quality olive oil, some finely chopped parsley and some sumac or smoky paprika for color. Serve with Pita chips, bread, veggies or use it as a spread on sandwiches. Be creative and enjoy!