

A COOKBOOK

# FALASTIN

SAMI TAMIMI TARA WIGLEY

Photography by Jenny Zarins



EBURY  
PRESS



## Contents

<b>Foreword</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Breakfast</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Snacks, Spreads and Sauces</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Veggie Sides and Salads</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>Soups</b>	<b>144</b>
<b>Veggie Mains</b>	<b>158</b>
<b>Fish</b>	<b>186</b>
<b>Meat</b>	<b>216</b>
<b>Breads and Pastries</b>	<b>274</b>
<b>Sweets</b>	<b>298</b>
<b>Glossary</b>	<b>334</b>
<b>Index</b>	<b>343</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>350</b>

## Baby gem lettuce with burnt aubergine yoghurt, smacked cucumber and shatta

This works well either as a stand-alone starter or as part of a spread or side. It's lovely with some hot smoked salmon or trout. 'Smacked' cucumbers sounds a bit dramatic but, really, it's just a way of bruising them so as to allow all the flavour to seep through to the flesh. Thanks to Ottolenghi chef Calvin Von Niebel for this salad.

*Getting ahead:* Make all the elements well in advance, here, if you like: up to a day for the cucumber and the aubergine yoghurt, and the shatta needs to be made in advance, so you'll be all set here.

*Playing around:* Some crumbled feta on top works very well, and if you don't have the Urfa chilli flakes, just use a pinch of black nigella seeds or some black sesame seeds.

---

There are two ways to chargrill the aubergines: on an open flame on the stove top, or in a chargrill pan on an induction hob followed by 10 minutes in a hot oven. See page 335 for more detailed instructions. Once cooked, the scooped-out flesh should weigh about 160g. Place this in the bowl of a food processor along with the yoghurt, garlic, lemon juice, tahini and ½ teaspoon of salt. Blitz for about a minute, until completely smooth, then set aside until needed.

Prepare the cucumber by placing each half on a chopping board, cut side facing down. Using the flat side of a large knife, lightly 'smack' them until bruised but still holding their shape. Cut the cucumber into roughly 1cm dice and set aside.

Clean the food processor, then add the parsley, mint, garlic, olive oil and ¼ teaspoon of salt. Blitz for about 2 minutes, scraping down the sides a couple of times if you need to, to form a smooth paste, then add to the cucumber. Set aside for at least 20 minutes (and up to a day in advance if kept in the fridge) for the flavours to infuse.

Slice each head of baby gem lengthways to make 8 long thin wedges (per lettuce). When ready to assemble, arrange the lettuce on a round platter, overlapping the outer and inner circle to look like the petals of a flower. Lightly sprinkle the wedges with salt and a grind of black pepper, then splatter over the aubergine yoghurt. Spoon over the cucumber, drizzle with the shatta, sprinkle over the chilli flakes and serve.

### Serves four generously

5–6 baby gem lettuces (500g),  
bases trimmed  
1½ tbsp shatta (red or green) (see  
page 73) (or rose harissa, as an  
alternative)  
½ tsp Urfa chilli flakes (or a small  
pinch of nigella seeds or black  
sesame seeds, as an alternative)  
Salt and black pepper

### Aubergine yoghurt

2 large aubergines (500g)  
35g Greek-style yoghurt  
½ a garlic clove, roughly chopped  
1½ tbsp lemon juice  
1½ tbsp tahini (25g)

### Smacked cucumber

1 regular English (i.e. not a small  
Lebanese) cucumber, peeled,  
sliced in half lengthways and  
watery seeds removed (180g)  
25g parsley, roughly chopped  
25g mint leaves, roughly chopped  
½ a garlic clove, roughly chopped  
50ml olive oil



## Aubergine, chickpea and tomato bake

### *Musaqa'a*

Echoes of the Greek dish moussaka are correctly heard here, both in the name and the feel of the dish. It's a vegetarian take on the hearty, humble, healthy and completely delicious traybake. It works well either as a veggie main or as a side with all sorts of things: piled into a jacket potato, for example, or served alongside some grilled meat, fish or tofu. It's just the sort of dish you want to have in the fridge ready to greet you after a day out at work. It's also lovely at room temperature, so it's great to pile into the Tupperware for an on-the-go lunch.

*Getting ahead:* You can make and bake this in advance: it keeps in the fridge for up to 3 days, ready to be warmed through when needed.

Preheat the oven to 220°C fan.

Use a vegetable peeler to peel away strips of aubergine skin from top to bottom, leaving the aubergines with alternating strips of black skin and white flesh, like a zebra. Cut widthways into round slices, 2cm thick, and place in a large bowl. Mix well with 75ml of oil, 1 teaspoon of salt and plenty of black pepper and spread out on two large parchment-lined baking trays. Roast for about 30 minutes, or until completely softened and lightly browned. Remove from the oven and set aside.

Reduce the oven temperature to 180°C fan.

While the aubergines are roasting, make the sauce. Put 2 tablespoons of oil into a large sauté pan and place on a medium-high heat. Add the onion and cook for about 7 minutes, until softened and lightly browned. Add the garlic, chilli, cumin, cinnamon and tomato purée and cook for another minute, or until fragrant. Add the peppers, chickpeas, tinned tomatoes, sugar, 200ml of water, 1¼ teaspoons of salt and a good grind of black pepper. Reduce the heat to medium and cook for 18 minutes, or until the peppers have cooked through. Stir in the coriander and remove from the heat.

Spread out half the plum tomatoes and half the roasted aubergines on the base of a large baking dish, about 20 x 30cm. Top with the chickpea mixture, then layer with the remaining tomatoes and aubergines. Drizzle with the remaining tablespoon of oil, then cover with foil and bake for 30 minutes. Remove the foil and bake for another 20 minutes, or until the sauce is bubbling and the tomatoes have completely softened. Remove from the oven and leave to cool for about 20 minutes. Top with the remaining coriander and serve either warm or at room temperature.

**Serves four as a main or six as a side**

5 medium aubergines (1.25kg)  
120ml olive oil  
1 onion, finely chopped (160g)  
6 garlic cloves, crushed  
1 tsp chilli flakes  
1 tsp ground cumin  
½ tsp ground cinnamon  
1½ tsp tomato purée  
2 green peppers, deseeded and cut into 3cm chunks (200g)  
1 x 400g tin of chickpeas, drained and rinsed (240g)  
1 x 400g tin of chopped tomatoes  
1½ tsp caster sugar  
15g coriander, roughly chopped, plus 5g extra to serve  
4 plum tomatoes, trimmed and sliced into 1½cm-thick rounds (350g)  
Salt and black pepper

