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**MEAL
PLANS &
RECIPES**

Dips & Dressings

These can be amazingly sensual when you combine the right colours, flavours and smells. Salads and crudités served with lovely dips and dressings are wonderful in summer, but you can have them in the winter too. Many dips can be turned into dressings by simply adding enough milk or water to give a pouring or spooning consistency.

Garlic Sauce

This is the 'Lighten Up' version of the French and Spanish aioli that tastes so wonderful on holiday. Everybody knows garlic is good for you – and it's even healthier when you eat it raw. If you're worried about the antisocial aspects of eating raw garlic, try chewing some fresh parsley after your meal.

- 2 plump cloves of garlic, crushed
- 150ml/5 fl oz mayonnaise (you can use reduced fat mayonnaise if you want)
- 150ml/5 fl oz low fat live natural yoghurt (Greek style is best)
- Salt and pepper

- 1 Simply crush the garlic and mix into the mayonnaise and yoghurt, season to taste and leave covered in the fridge for at least an hour for the garlic flavour to permeate the mixture.
- 2 Serve instead of butter with crusty bread, as they do in the Mediterranean. Use it as a dressing for potato or pasta salads, or serve it with grilled fish.

Variations: To this base add a peeled, stoned avocado and whiz together until smooth, using a hand held blender; or make it into a bean pâté or dip by whizzing with a drained can of cannelloni beans or chickpeas, sharpened with a little lemon or lime juice, and seasoned with salt and paprika pepper.

Tomato Dressing

A tasty, extremely low fat way to dress green salads, slaws and pasta salads.

- 150ml/¼ pint of passata
 - Olive oil
 - Balsamic vinegar, garlic, chilli, soy sauce, honey and ginger
- or
- Wholegrain mustard, honey and black pepper

- 1 Base it on tomato juice or the thicker tomato passata, adding just a tablespoon of olive oil to about 150ml/¼ pint of passata.
- 2 Flavour with a little wine or balsamic vinegar, garlic, chilli, soy sauce, honey and ginger, or with wholegrain mustard, honey and black pepper.

Creamy Cucumber Dressing

You can use this instead of mayonnaise with pasta or potato salads. Spoon it over a salad of sliced avocado and tomato, or use it to top jacket potatoes or kebabs served with salad and pitta bread.

- 150g/5 fl oz Greek style thick low fat live yoghurt
- 175g/6oz piece cucumber, chopped
- Few sprigs fresh dill or 1 tsp dried dill
- 2 tsp olive oil
- 2-3 tsp white wine or cider vinegar, to taste
- Salt and pepper

- 1 Place all the ingredients in a jug and blend with a hand held bar blender for a few seconds until smooth. Taste and adjust the seasonings.

Variations: Replace the dill with fresh chopped mint, adding garlic to taste.



Dips & Dressings *(continued)*

Avocado and Tofu (or Bean) Dip

Both tofu (fermented soya bean curd) and beans are a great source of protein, which would make this dip into a well balanced light meal, needing only the addition of some vegetable crudité's and bread, pitta bread or rice cakes.

- 1 small ripe avocado, peeled and stoned
- 115g/4oz silken tofu
- 2 tbsp low fat quark, yoghurt or fromage frais
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- Salt or garlic salt and paprika pepper

1 Place all the ingredients in a jug and puree with a hand held bar blender until smooth. Taste and add more seasoning if needed.

Variation: Instead of tofu use a drained can of cannellini, flageolet or butter beans or chickpeas.

Dippers: Vegetables

Use vegetables instead of fatty, salty crisps or tortilla chips in these wonderful dips:

- whole radishes
- broccoli
- spring onions
- cauliflower
- chicory
- mangetout
- baby sweetcorn
- carrots (cut into sticks)
- courgettes (cut into sticks)
- celery (cut into sticks)

Dippers: Poppadoms

Put the poppadoms in the microwave for one minute each, then break them into dipping size pieces.

Dippers: Pitta crisps

Make pitta crisps by splitting pitta breads through the centre using a sharp knife, cutting them into wedges and grilling or baking them until they are crispy and golden brown, which will happen quickly as they are so thin.

A light spritz of oil from the oil spray before grilling will give even better colour and crispness.