



DOROTHY FLESHMAN
DORY'S DIARY

Loading the larder for winter

This is the time of year that we check our larder to be sure things are ready for the holidays and into winter.

The shelves are lined with our Atlas, Mason, Ball, and Kerr jars of fruit and pickles.

Foods like beans have been canned either at the local cannery or in our own pressure cooker to be sure they will be safe to eat when the jar is opened. Cabbages have gone into the crock for sauerkraut, salted and weighted down with a heavy rock on a plate, a cloth beneath.

Apples, pears, prunes, apricots, and cherries are from our own trees in the backyard and handy on canning day, but peaches have been purchased out-of-state by an aunt whose daughter drives her shopping each fall in order to bring back produce for any family members who have so ordered.

This includes strawberries from Western Oregon, but not raspberries that grow in our own gardens and will be eaten fresh, frozen, or made into jam. Our apples go into pies and applesauce, the bulk into storage.

It makes my mouth water at those days when so much of our food came right from our own gardening toil, shared or traded so that everyone had opportunity to eat well in the long, cold, icy winter days.

Phone calls came and went as families were assured of table meals well-planned for day-to-day fare — full tummies and healthy bodies.

When basics were cared-for in pats of home-churned butter, meats from hunting the wilds, chickens from coops and rabbits from hutches, pigs for lard and pork chops, and vegetables stored and home-baked breads, cakes, pies and cookies ready to be tabled, then and only then, were homemakers satisfied to face the winter ahead.

Preparing for winter when the produce was ready reminds me of our cellar on the hill where we stored apples, potatoes and vegetables.

What we called a cellar wasn't underground but was on the ground floor of our chalet home behind the living room that stretched across the front of the building set on a concrete slab. The cellar and milk-room were behind closed doors for their individual uses, but the cellar was backed by the earth of the hill against which it was set where it kept everything at naturally cold but not freezing temperatures.

Along each side of the room were deep bins separated by wood-built sides for the various vegetables, and a hanging shelf above each for smaller items, a pathway down the middle for workers.

It isn't easy to explain just how it was done by my Swiss grandfather who had built the two-story home, but it worked very well in that when we wanted an apple or to cook a meal in the small kitchen off the living room, the fresh produce was right at hand behind the stairway that led to the parlor and bedrooms on the upper floor.

It was later that canned jars of fruit and vegetables filled the shelves in the milk-house out by the barn after the dairy closed.

I remember how it was when I was a child and the disagreeable task in the spring of cleaning out the near-empty bins and hauling it out to the compost pile, but it was all gone by the time I was in my teens.

We all earned the food we ate by planting, watering, hoeing weeds, picking and preparing food for storage or eating, and helping with all chores. It was good that we had space in which to grow our food, wells, springs, and streams with which to water and clean, family and friends with whom to share or trade, and homes in which to enjoy each other in groups large or small.

We all worked hard to make eating possible. BUT, we ate well!

I remember those days as the best days of life because of those with whom they were shared.



Kristen Mendiola/The Daily Meal-TNS

Sesame cashew tahini blondies.

By **JEANMARIE BROWNSON**
The Daily Meal

Tahini, a staple in my condiment collection, is best known for homemade hummus, baba ganoush and as a key ingredient in sauces to pair with falafel and other Middle Eastern bites. But tahini is the gift that keeps on giving and has uses far beyond the expected.

Tahini is simply a puree of sesame seeds. Nothing else. Think of it as an alternative to peanut and other nut butters.

Bottled tahini takes the work (and the mess) out of grinding sesame seeds. Make sure to read the labels to ensure that nothing else is added.

Soom, made from Ethiopian white humera sesame, is the preferred brand of chefs for its silken texture and rich sesame flavor. However, this brand can be a bit hard to track down in stores. For easy shopping, consider the roasted sesame seed flavor in tahini from the Whole Foods 365 brand or the milder organic tahini from Trader Joe's.

Note that vigorous stirring is required for nearly all tahini brands; the mixture separates out oil, much like natural peanut butters. While it's best used at room temperature, you should store tahini in the refrigerator to prevent the oils from turning rancid.

Of course, pretty, creamy white sesame seeds can entice you to make your own tahini. The small bottles sold in the spice section of most supermarkets are pricey so look for bulk sesame seeds instead. In general, hulled sesame seeds, which have a creamy white hue, taste less bitter than beige or grayish sesame seeds which have their hull still intact.

To make your own tahini, toast 1 cup of sesame seeds in a skillet over low heat, stirring constantly, until some of the seeds are just a little bit golden in color, but not browned. Transfer to a plate and cool completely. Then, process the seeds in a food processor or blender — you'll get the smoothest results with a high-speed blender — until the seeds are the texture of fine sand. With the machine running, drizzle in untoasted sesame oil, grapeseed oil or safflower oil until smooth and mixture has the consistency of very thin peanut butter. Transfer to a jar and refrigerate covered for a week or more.

For breakfast, spread homemade tahini on toast with a drizzle of honey and a sliced banana with a dollop of yogurt. It's also a great addition to smoothies.



Kristen Mendiola/The Daily Meal-TNS

Tahini is a puree of sesame seeds. Think of it as an alternative to peanut and other nut butters.

Consider the lovely sesame paste for baking. It adds great flavor to cookies, brownies and homemade ice cream. Or, of course, you can use tahini for these recipes.

CREAMY LEMON HUMMUS

Prep: 10 minutes
Makes 1 3/4 cups

Tahini and garbanzo beans, aka chickpeas, make classic hummus. Replacing some of the garbanzo beans with white beans yields a lighter, creamier version that's a delicious, satisfying dip for raw vegetables and crackers. A garnish of tangy ground sumac underscores the lemon flavors. This recipe doubles nicely and keeps for about a week in the refrigerator.

1 (15-ounce) can garbanzo beans
1 (15-ounce) can white beans
1/4 cup tahini, at room temperature
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper
Grated rind from 1 small lemon
Extra virgin olive oil, for serving
Optional toppings: crushed red pepper flakes; ground sumac; chopped fresh herbs (such as dill, cilantro, parsley or chives)

1. Strain garbanzo beans and white beans over a bowl to catch the juices. Reserve the juices. Put 4 ounces of garbanzo beans and 4 ounces of white beans into a blender or food processor. Save remaining beans for another use.
2. Add 1/4 cup tahini, 2 tablespoons each oil and lemon juice, 1/2 teaspoon salt, 1/8 teaspoon cayenne and 1/4 cup of the reserved bean liquid. Process until very smooth. Taste and add remaining oil and lemon juice as desired. Puree. Add more bean liquid (or cold water) to reach desired thickness. Scrape into a bowl.
3. Stir in grated lemon rind. Taste and adjust salt. Refrigerate covered up to several days.
4. Serve with a pool of extra virgin olive oil poured over the hummus. Top with one or more of the options, as desired.

GREEN CHILE TAHINI SAUCE

Prep: 20 minutes
Makes 1 1/2 cups

Note: You can substitute 1 can (4 ounces) roasted green chiles, drained, for the fresh chile here. This sauce goes well with grilled lamb chops, salmon or halibut.

1 fresh hatch chile or small poblano chile, roasted, peeled, seeded
1/2 of a 15-ounce can cannellini or other white beans, drained

See, [Tahini](#)/Page B3

Spooky cocktails made with 'boos'



Christian Gooden/St. Louis Post-Dispatch-TNS

The Zombie.

By **DANIEL NEMAN**
St. Louis Post-Dispatch

I'm just going to be honest here: I've never actually been frightened by a drink. Have you?

Nevertheless, this is the time of year when food writers — ordinarily a wise and sagacious bunch — write about cocktails that are frightening or scary or spooky.

But when they say "frightening" or "scary" or "spooky," what they mean is "kind of fun for Halloween."

In anticipation of the annual celebration of costumes and candy, I made a six-fingered handful of cocktails that are kind of fun for the season around Halloween. They won't scare you or make your heart pound faster in terror, but they come in unusual colors that some people find scary (blood red, black, bilious green) or are simply made from ingredients that are appropriate for the season (apple cider, pomegranates).

Most have been given names that are supposed to imply some amount of fear. Do not be fooled by them. These are just excellent cocktails that are delightful for Halloween or any other day of the year.

Take, for example, the Zombie, a classic that has been around since 1934; it was invented at the famous Don the Beachcomber restaurant in Hollywood. It's only considered frightening because of its name, and it only got the name because it is so potent that drinking too many of them could turn you into the walking dead.

But it's a great cocktail if you like rum, or even if you don't (but it's better if you do). Three types of rum go into it: white rum, golden rum and the surreptitiously lethal 151 rum, which is 151 proof. These are mixed with orange juice, pineapple juice and a splash of lime juice, to give it that tiki-bar tropical feel.

See, [Cocktails](#)/Page B3