

Spotlighting The Chickpea

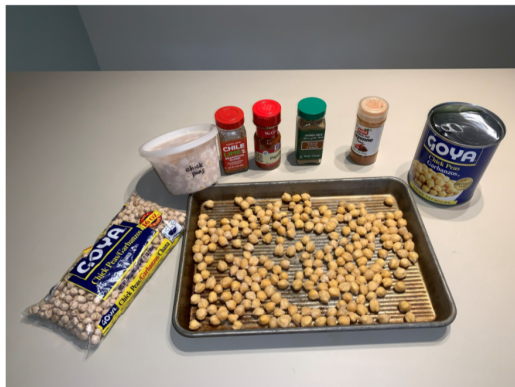
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To keep pandemic cooking spicy and exciting, let's swing the spotlight on the chickpea, aka garbanzo bean - so versatile – used in numerous cuisines including Mediterranean, Indian, Middle Eastern. The chickpea is a great source of fiber and protein – and hard to overeat.

My friend has been raving about roasted chickpeas for years and the pandemic afforded me the time to finally give it a try. My family's taste buds went nuts and roasted chickpeas have now become one of our favorite snacks.

Below is a fun, easy, tasty, and healthy way to prepare chickpeas. The underlined words are my criteria for most recipes I choose to make for my family and teach my patients.

Let's call it: **Roasted Chick Peas a la carte**



Ingredients:

- 1 cup of cooked chickpeas (made from dried chickpeas; can be batch cooked and frozen for future access – see photo) or 1 can of chickpeas – note, canned chickpeas have added sodium
- Pick any or all of these spices: Cumin, Chili powder, Cayenne pepper, Paprika, Curry, Your favorite spice/blend.
- Olive oil (optional – some choose dry roasting)
- Salt – just a touch – may not even be needed (especially if using canned chickpeas)

Defrost (if using frozen) or Rinse (if canned) the chickpeas and dry as much as possible. In a mixing bowl, add the chickpeas, a tablespoon or two of olive oil to coat the chickpeas, and add your spice choice(s). Roast in preheated 425 degree oven for 30-40 minutes (shake pan and taste periodically). Salt to taste if you must.

Enjoy a memorable crunch that makes you want to eat the entire bowl.

This is a great snack when warm, but also can be enjoyed over the next few days, as a room temperature snack, or as an addition to salads or toppings to meals.



In the photos you'll see my experimentation results of various spices (they all tasted great!)

For a twist, roast some chickpeas without the oil (your choice on spices), roast a bit longer, close to 50-60 minutes. Once the chickpeas reach room temperature, melt some chocolate and dip the chickpeas in chocolate. Before the chocolate gets dry, add some sea salt. Chill for 30 minutes. Enjoy as a sweet dessert or snack, but please share with others.

Remember, the trick to cooking - as to life - is to experiment either alone and/or with others. Right now, cook with others virtually - it's a great way to catch up, share recipe tips, share a meal together, discuss why the chickpea crossed the road, and fantasize about life beyond the pandemic.
