



## nectar of the pods

### POPPY CHICKPEA SALAD

RECIPE COURTESY JERRY TRAUNFELD OF POPPY (OPENING ON CAPITOL HILL IN SEPTEMBER)

*Traunfeld flavors this simple chickpea salad with ajwain seeds, a staple of Indian and Middle Eastern cuisines, available at specialty spice shops like Pike Place's Market Spice. When fresh garbanzos are unavailable, chef Traunfeld recommends using Spanish chickpeas from a jar, which have slightly less salt than canned peas.*

#### INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups cooked chickpeas, jarred or fresh
- 2 tbsp peanut or other vegetable oil
- 1 tsp black or brown mustard seed
- ½ tsp cumin seed
- ¼ tsp ajwain seed (or substitute fennel or celery seed)
- ¼ tsp red chili flakes (or less, for a milder salad)
- 1 tbsp freshly squeezed lemon juice
- ¾ tsp sea salt
- ¼ cup fresh cilantro, chopped
- ½ cup green onion, chopped
- ½ cup whole milk yogurt

#### DIRECTIONS

Simmer fresh chickpeas for 15 to 20 minutes in salted water or rinse jarred chickpeas. Drain well and transfer to a mixing bowl.

Preheat a small skillet over medium-high heat, then pour in oil. When oil is very hot, add mustard seed. Partially cover the pan to shield the sputtering seeds, then turn heat to low. When sputtering subsides, uncover, add cumin, ajwain, and chili flakes, and cook for about 10 seconds—until the spices are a deeper brown and fragrant.

Immediately pour the oil and spices over the chickpeas. Add lemon juice, salt, cilantro, and green onion, and stir to combine with a rubber spatula. Mix in yogurt. Serve right away or refrigerate and bring to room temperature before serving.

MAKES  
**6**  
SERVINGS

PREP TIME  
**15**  
MINUTES

With fresh chickpeas, it's what's inside that counts. | by Jess Thomson

**I**t was awfully awkward the first time my neighbor offered me fresh chickpeas. The mature plant looked like a shriveled bouquet of flowers that had never been pretty to start. My neighbor held the tangle out at arm's length, knowing how lucky he'd been to find them fresh, and I just stared, trying to keep from wrinkling my nose in disgust. What did I want with a bushel of dead branches covered with puffy, light-green coffee beans?

"A lot of people have never seen chickpeas fresh," says Eduardo Alvarez, a Seattle farmers market purveyor who plants them each year on his family's farm 30 miles south of Yakima. Chickpeas—also called garbanzo or ceci beans—are a protein-rich legume, grown on a bush that matures in midsummer. The beans are typically dried or canned, but when they're fresh they can be eaten raw as a crunchy snack or simply boiled with a little salt. Cooked straight out of the pod, chickpeas have a softer consistency than the canned kind, with more earthy flavor and a color that varies from buttery yellow to the same soft green as the furry pods. But, because chickpeas start drying out just a week

after they're ready for harvest, the season is short. Alvarez's regular customers go wild when the legumes come to market each July. "Once people try them, I can't seem to keep them in good supply," he says.

This year I'll be the one handing a friend, another one of my neighbors, dead flowers. When he takes the haul home to start shelling, painstakingly removing one or two chickpeas from each pod, my pal will feel like he's inherited the worst kind of spouse; the unlovely legumes are not nearly beautiful enough to be so high maintenance. But half an hour later, when the methodical rhythm of shelling has exerted its relaxing effects and he's sitting on the porch in the afternoon sun eating the entire bowl of a salad he meant to save for dinner, he'll thank me. And the next weekend, he'll probably go looking for another bunch. ✿

Find fresh chickpeas this month at Alvarez Organic Farms' stands at neighborhood farmers markets around Seattle (including Ballard, Madison, and Queen Anne). One large bundle of chickpeas—from two bushes—yields about ¾ cup fresh chickpeas.