

Spring Vegetables & Toasted Pearl Couscous

with Spicy Halloumi-Style Cheese

PREP TIME: 15 minutes

COOK TIME: 25-35 minutes

SERVINGS: 2

Halloumi and other “frying cheeses” are known for their briny flavor and springy texture, which helps them stand up to frying without melting. Here, we’re marinating our halloumi-style cheese in labneh and harissa (a smoky red chile paste), then pan-frying it for a crispy exterior. The cheese gives savory contrast to a trio of roasted late-spring vegetables—asperagus, Vidalia onion, and rainbow carrots—and pearl couscous, toasted first for nutty flavor. We’re serving it all over a refreshing bed of arugula dressed with a bit more labneh.



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Light & Fresh

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Ingredients



1 cup
PEARL COUSCOUS



4 oz
HALLOUMI-STYLE
CHEESE



4
RAINBOW
CARROTS



1 bunch
MINT



1 bunch
ASPARAGUS



2 oz
ARUGULA



1
LEMON



1
VIDALIA ONION

KNICK KNACKS:



1 Tbsp
RED HARISSA
PASTE



1/2 cup
LABNEH CHEESE



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1 Prepare the ingredients & marinate the cheese:

- ☐ Preheat the oven to 450°F.
- ☐ Wash and dry the fresh produce.
- ☐ Peel the carrots and cut into 1/2-inch pieces on an angle.
- ☐ Peel the onion; cut into 1/4-inch-wide wedges.
- ☐ Cut off and discard the tough, woody stem ends of the asparagus; cut into 2-inch pieces.
- ☐ Pick the mint leaves off the stems; discard the stems and roughly chop the leaves.
- ☐ Quarter and deseed the lemon.
- ☐ Large dice the cheese; place in a medium bowl with **half the labneh, the juice of 2 lemon wedges, and as much of the harissa paste as you'd like**, depending on how spicy you'd like the dish to be. Stir to combine. Season with salt and pepper.



2 Roast the vegetables:

- ☐ Place the **carrots** and **onion** on a sheet pan. Place the **asparagus** in a bowl. Drizzle each with olive oil and season with salt and pepper; toss to coat. Arrange the seasoned carrots and onion in a single, even layer on 1 side of the sheet pan. Roast 10 to 11 minutes, or until slightly softened. Leaving the oven on, remove the roasted carrots and onion from the oven. Carefully arrange the seasoned asparagus in a single layer on the other side of the sheet pan. Roast 6 to 7 minutes, or until the carrots and onion are lightly browned and tender when pierced with a fork. Remove from the oven.

3 Toast & cook the couscous:

- ☐ While the vegetables roast, in a medium pot, heat a drizzle of olive oil on medium-high until hot. Add the **couscous** and season with salt and pepper. Toast, stirring constantly, 2 to 3 minutes, or until lightly browned and fragrant. Add **4 cups of water**; heat to boiling on high.
- ☐ Once boiling, cook, uncovered, 4 to 5 minutes, or until tender. Turn off the heat. Drain thoroughly and return to the pot. Stir in **the juice of 1 lemon wedge** and a drizzle of olive oil. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

4 Cook the cheese:

- ☐ While the couscous cooks, in a medium pan (nonstick, if you have one), heat a drizzle of olive oil on medium-high until hot. Add the **marinated cheese** (reserving the excess marinade). Cook, without turning, 2 to 3 minutes, or until browned. Continue to cook, turning occasionally, 2 to 3 minutes, or until browned and slightly crispy. Transfer to a plate; season with salt and pepper to taste. Set aside in a warm place.



5 Finish the couscous & vegetables:

- ☐ To the pot of **cooked couscous**, add the **roasted vegetables, reserved marinade, and half the mint**; stir to combine. Season with salt and pepper to taste.



6 Dress the arugula & plate your dish:

- ☐ In a medium bowl, combine the **remaining labneh and the juice of the remaining lemon wedge**. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Add the **arugula**; toss to coat. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
- ☐ Divide the dressed arugula between 2 dishes. Top with the **finished couscous and vegetables** and **cooked cheese**. Garnish with the **remaining mint**. Enjoy!