

Toum (Lebanese Garlic Sauce)

Make authentic Lebanese Toum garlic sauce with just 4 ingredients. Creamy, potent, and perfect for grilled meats, sandwiches, and Middle Eastern dishes.

15 min

PREP

15 min

TOTAL

8

SERVINGS

Easy

DIFFICULTY

Ingredients

- 1 cup garlic
- 3 cup canola oil
- 1 cup fresh lemon juice
- 1 cup water
- 1 tsp salt

Instructions

- 1 Prepare the garlic base**

Add 1 cup garlic cloves and 1 teaspoon salt to a food processor bowl. Process for 60-90 seconds until the mixture is completely smooth and paste-like with no visible garlic pieces remaining.
- 2 Scrape down the sides of the bowl with a rubber spatula. Process for another 30 seconds to ensure the garlic paste is uniformly smooth.**
- 3 Begin oil emulsion**

Turn the food processor to high speed and begin drizzling 3 cups oil in the thinnest possible stream through the feed tube. This process should take 4-5 minutes for the first cup of oil.
- 4 Continue processing while adding the second cup of oil in a thin stream over another 3-4 minutes. The mixture should start to turn pale and thicken slightly.**
- 5 Add 2 tablespoons of the 1 cup lemon juice when the mixture becomes noticeably thick and pale white. Continue processing while slowly adding the remaining third cup of oil over 2-3 minutes.**

- 6 Gradually add the remaining lemon juice, 2 tablespoons at a time, while continuing to process. The sauce should become light, fluffy, and hold its shape when the processor stops.
- 7 **Adjust seasoning**

Taste the toum and adjust seasoning with additional salt or lemon juice as needed. Process for 30 seconds more to incorporate any adjustments.
- 8 Transfer the toum to an airtight container and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes before serving to allow the texture to stabilize and flavors to meld.

Tips

Use fresh, firm garlic cloves and remove any green germ in the center, which can add bitterness to the final sauce.

Ensure all ingredients are at room temperature before beginning—cold ingredients resist emulsification and increase the risk of breaking.

Add oil in the thinnest possible stream while the processor runs continuously; rushing this step almost guarantees failure.

If the mixture breaks, stop adding oil immediately and process until it comes together before continuing with oil addition.

Scrape the bowl sides frequently during processing to ensure even mixing and prevent garlic pieces from hiding.

Add lemon juice gradually between oil additions to maintain proper acidity levels and prevent the emulsion from becoming too thick.

Store in a glass container rather than plastic to prevent the garlic from absorbing unwanted flavors or odors.

Let the finished toum rest for 30 minutes before serving to allow flavors to meld and the texture to stabilize.