

7-LAYER MIDDLE EASTERN MOUNTAIN

Given the deliciousness and popularity of layered bean dips like the 7-Layer Tex-Mex Mountain on page 41, why not riff on the idea using Mediterranean/Middle Eastern ingredients? This take is a wonderful creation; as a friend tasting it remarked, “This totally puts the ‘Bop’ in Bosphorus.” Well, yes, kind of. Another testing-and-tasting compañero called it “Mount Olive.” **Ve**

1 very crisp cucumber, peeled, seeded, and chopped

6 to 8 fresh red radishes, tops and tails removed, well washed, and chopped

1 fresh green chile, stemmed, seeds removed for mildness or left in for heat, finely minced

Juice of 1 lemon

¼ teaspoon salt

2 bunches of scallions, derooted, whites and about 3 inches of green chopped

1 bunch of fresh mint or parsley or ½ bunch of fresh dill (or a combination of all three), well rinsed, stemmed, and finely chopped

2½ cups hummus, either homemade (see page 30) or from the market

6 ounces (½ cup) good-quality creamy, tender feta (I like the kind made from sheep’s milk)

3 large tomatoes, stemmed and finely chopped

1½ cups sour cream or thick, full-fat unsweetened plain yogurt (Greek-style is great here)

1 cup pitted, oil-cured black olives, minced

A few large red-leaf lettuce leaves or a handful of pretty, well-washed spinach leaves (optional)

Pita chips, such as Stacy’s brand, or toasted wedges of pita bread, for serving

1 In a medium-size bowl, toss together the chopped cuke and radishes. Add the chile, lemon juice, and salt and toss to combine. Set aside.

2 In a separate bowl, combine the scallions and mint, parsley, and/or dill. Set aside.

3 Spread the hummus on the bottom of a glass pie pan. Sprinkle the cucumber mixture over it, then the scallion mixture, the feta, and lastly, the tomatoes. “Ice” the mountain you’ve made with the sour cream or yogurt, and sprinkle with the minced olives. If you like, poke a few lettuce or spinach leaves around the mountain’s base to frame it decoratively.

4 Serve with a bowl of pita crisps alongside.

Serves 6 to 8 as an appetizer