

# Brunch Twist On Avocado Toast Pocket

The popular brunch staple gets a holiday appetizer makeover in this phyllo-crust pocket version. The avocado toast is a delicious combo of creamy avocado, fresh tomato, onion and tart lime, and is beautifully paired with a cilantro-sour cream for dipping. Serves eight for less than \$0.70 each.

## Avocado Toast Pockets

Prep time: 20 minutes

Cook time: 10 minutes

Serves: 8 (5 pockets each)

Ingredients:

- 2 avocados, diced
- 1 plum tomato, seeded and diced
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) frozen corn, thawed
- 1/4 cup (60 mL) minced red onion
- 2 tbsp. (30 mL) lime juice, divided
- 2 tsp (10 mL) chili powder
- 1 garlic clove, grated and divided
- 1/2 tsp (2 mL) salt, divided
- 6 sheets phyllo pastry



- 2 tbsp. (30 mL) salted butter, melted
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 2/3 cup (160 mL) sour cream
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) cilantro,

finely minced

Directions:

1. Heat oven to 375F (190C). Line two rimmed baking sheets with parchment.

2. Stir together avocado, tomato, corn, red onion, 2 tsp (10 mL) lime juice, chili powder, half the garlic and 1/4 tsp (1 mL) salt in a medium bowl.

3. On clean counter top, place one sheet of pastry. Brush evenly with butter and top with another sheet, smoothing to flatten. Brush second sheet with butter and top with a third sheet. Cut sheet along the long edge into 5 even strips. Cut each strip in half crosswise and in half again to make 4, 3-inch (8 cm) squares. Repeat with remaining strips.

4. Fill one half of each square with 1 tbsp. (15 mL) filling, leaving a 1/2 inch (1 cm) border. Brush border with egg wash. Fold pointed edge of unfilled half over to create a triangle and press firmly to adhere to egg-washed edges. Place on prepared sheet and brush triangles with egg wash. Bake until golden; about 10 minutes. Repeat with remaining pastry sheets and filling.

4. Meanwhile, mix sour cream, cilantro, remaining lime juice, garlic and salt in a small bowl. Serve with pockets. Find more recipes online at [walmart.ca/recipes](http://walmart.ca/recipes). [www.newscanada.com](http://www.newscanada.com)

# Tender Puff Pastry Canapes With Two Toppings

Tender puff pastry is prepared with two different toppings to whet the appetites of your Christmas party guests. In one hand, they'll have tart pears topped with walnuts and sweet honey, and in the other, a salty prosciutto and sundried tomato with bitter arugula. Both are layered on a creamy ricotta cheese base. Everything needed to make this budget-friendly, delicious decadence can be found at Walmart for less than \$1.70 a serving.

## Puff Pastry Canapes

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 30 minutes

Serves: 8 (4 canapes each)

Ingredients:

- 1 450 g package butter puff pastry, thawed
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 1 cup (250 mL) ricotta cheese

- 1/2 pear, thinly sliced
- 1/4 cup (125 mL) toasted walnuts, chopped
- 3 tbsp. (45 mL) honey
- 1 cup (250 mL) arugula
- 8 slices prosciutto, cut in half lengthwise
- 1/4 cup (60 mL) sundried tomatoes, chopped

Directions:

1. Heat oven to 400F (200C). Line two rimmed baking sheets with parchment.

2. Unroll one sheet of puff pastry. Cut pastry evenly into 4 strips. Cut each strip evenly into 4 parts to make 16 squares. Place on prepared pan, score 2 or 3 times with a fork and brush with egg wash. Bake until golden and puffed; about 14 minutes. Repeat with remaining sheet. Cool 5 minutes.



3. Spread each square with 1 1/2 tsp (7 mL) ricotta cheese. Top 16 squares with pear slices, wal-

- nuts and a drizzle of honey. Top remaining 16 squares with arugula, prosciutto and sundried to-

matoes. Find more great recipes online at [walmart.ca/recipes](http://walmart.ca/recipes). [www.newscanada.com](http://www.newscanada.com)

# Carrot And Chickpea Salad - A Bright Winter Dish

By *Melissa D'Arabian*

I first tasted *harissa* when I was 19, and I travelled on a lone adventure to Tunisia after spending a semester abroad in France. I browsed the open markets, with their appealing drapery white cotton clothing - I wore billowy pants from that trip for years to follow.

I was particularly drawn to the fragrant spice section of the market, which beckoned me over with its unfamiliar, dazzling aromas. I bought as many small pouches of mystery spices that my student budget could afford. My favourite was *harissa*, a mix of chilies and warm spices like coriander, cumin and paprika.

Thirty years later, *harissa* is fairly easy to find in the U.S., either in a well-stocked neighbourhood supermarket or online. If you like spicy food at all, it's a worthy purchase. It's available in both paste and dry powdered form, and once it's on your shelf, you'll find hundreds of uses for *harissa* - mix it into *hummus* or yogurt for a quick dip, add a spoonful to stews to deepen the flavour, rub meat for grilling, brush it on roasted or sauteed vegetables, or even on buttered toast for a tasty garlic-bread-like indulgence. Another idea: Add *harissa* to salad dressings to add an international flair.

Today's recipe for North African Carrot and Chickpea Salad pairs lightly sweet carrots with the warmth of *harissa*, and the result is balanced and not overly spicy, although feel free to add more or less according to your tastes.

Chickpeas add heft and protein, so you could turn this side dish into a vegetarian main, and herbs keep the dish bright and fresh. Purchasing the carrots pre-shredded is an excellent weekday timesaver. But even if you start with whole carrots, the entire dish can be thrown together in

mere minutes.

## NORTH AFRICAN CARROT AND CHICKPEA SALAD

Servings: 8

Start to finish: 15 minutes

Salad:

- 3 cups shredded carrots
- 1 1/4 cup cooked chickpeas (garbanzo beans), rinsed and drained if canned, about 1 can
- 1/4 cup fresh parsley leaves, chopped
- 1/4 cup fresh cilantro leaves, chopped
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh mint
- 2 green onions, chopped
- 2 tablespoons chopped almonds

Dressing:

- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard

- 2 tablespoons lemon juice or lime juice

- 1 tablespoon water

- 1 teaspoon lemon or lime zest

- 1 teaspoon powdered *harissa* (or 1 tablespoon *harissa* paste), or to taste (If you can't find it, substitute a mixture of smoked or sweet paprika, cayenne, cumin, coriander and granulated garlic.)

- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt

- 2 tablespoons olive oil

Place all the salad ingredients in a salad bowl. In a small bowl, whisk together the mustard, lemon or lime juice and zest, water, *harissa* and salt until well-blended. Slowly whisk in the olive oil until blended. Pour the dressing over the salad and toss to coat. Serve. - The Canadian Press



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