

FAMILY RECIPES

Great Dishes From Local Chefs | By Christina Elston

A Lot of Little Bites of Breakfast

Tim Hollingsworth grew up eating what he calls “very American” food: chili, chicken and dumplings, Sunday pot roast, tacos, barbecue tri-tip and burgers. As an adult, he’s been on quite a food journey, working with culinary legends such as Thomas Keller, Alain Ducasse and Gordon Ramsay – and eventually opening Otium next to The Broad museum in Downtown L.A.

Another part of his journey was marrying his wife, Caroline Hajjar, and becoming a father. They have a daughter who is almost 4, a 2-year-old son and a baby on the way. And it is this

family and cultural connection (Hajjar is Middle Eastern) that inspired Hollingsworth to offer up this recipe, Ful Medames, a breakfast dish full of fresh ingredients that make it perfect for summer. “I was introduced to it by [my wife’s] mom,” he says. “It’s something that they make and they’ve grown up having their whole lives.”

Cuisine diversity is something that Hollingsworth, who lives with his family in Mount Washington, loves about L.A. “There’s so many different ethnic cuisines, and I think that it’s awesome to be able to eat like that throughout the week, throughout the year,” he says.

Hollingsworth’s kids get into the act in the kitchen. His daughter has been cooking with him since she was 2, and his son now joins in to help with pancakes, omelets, cookies and pasta. “They just pull up a chair and help out,” he says, “whether it be whisking, breaking eggs or spilling flour all over the counter.”

The kids also love this dish, which everyone at the table can dress with the ingredients they like best. “They love yogurt and labneh,” says Hollingsworth, and they like to get hands-on. “Traditionally, you don’t use a spoon or utensil. You just use your hands and bread. They love that aspect of it.”



For the grown-ups, the diversity of fresh ingredients makes this dish. “One bite could be a tomato, and the next bite could be the ful and the next bite could be lettuce,” Hollingsworth says. “One of the reasons that I really love this dish is that you have different little bites of everything.” That means hitting your home garden and/or local farmers market for the produce, checking out your nearest Middle Eastern grocery for canned fava beans and labneh (though you can substitute Greek yogurt in a pinch) and investing in quality olive oil.

“The quality of olive oil that you use is very important,” says Hollingsworth. “It’s one of

those dishes that doesn’t have a lot of ingredients, so you want to have the highest quality in order to highlight them.” He recommends looking for smaller bottles with dark glass (sunlight destroys olive oil). Besides tasting the oil – as long as the flavor is good, whether you go spicy or fruity is up to you – he also rubs a little in the palms of his hands to get the full aroma before smelling it.

Once you have all the ingredients gathered and chopped, the meal comes together in minutes. “The nice part about it, too, is that it’s really fresh,” Hollingsworth says. That makes it the perfect collection of little bites for summer breakfast.



Chef Tim Hollingsworth learned this recipe from his mother-in-law.

PHOTOS COURTESY OTIUM



Ful Medames

16 oz. canned fava beans, rinsed and drained

½ cup olive oil

3 garlic cloves, crushed

1 teaspoon ground cumin

½ cup water

Salt and pepper

¼ cup fresh lemon juice

Romaine lettuce, leafed

Radishes, sliced

Tomatoes, chopped

Cucumber, sliced

Onion, roughly chopped

Hard-boiled eggs, cut into pieces

Fresh mint leaves

Labneh (strained yogurt)

Olives (Kalamata, Niçoise, Mediterranean or any variety), pitted

Additional olive oil and lemon juice

Pita bread

Simmer the fava beans in water in a medium saucepot until they are heated through, which should take no more than 5 or 10 minutes. Drain the beans, slightly crush them (leaving them a bit chunky) and mix in the raw garlic, cumin, ½ cup olive oil and ¼ cup lemon juice.

Put the romaine, radishes, tomatoes, cucumber, onion, eggs, mint, labneh, olives and additional olive oil and lemon juice out in bowls, salad-bar style. Let everyone garnish their ful as they like. Serve with fresh or toasted pita bread for scooping. ♦

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