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## Tzatziki

### Makes 2¼ cups

*In one word: refreshing! In two words: yogurt and cucumbers. Thank god (or maybe the gods?) for the Greeks for giving us this splendid mezze. It's so easy to make and I don't think there's anything you can't have it with — fish, lamb, chicken, you name it. Try to get hold of those cute Dutch cucumbers, as they are packed with flavor. This version is a bit thicker than most tzatzikis because I use labneh with the yogurt, but if you prefer you can simply loosen it with more yogurt to create a chilled yogurt and cucumber soup.*

- \* 1 baby Dutch cucumber, or ½ regular cucumber
- \* 1 garlic clove, finely grated
- \* handful of chopped mint leaves
- \* small handful of chopped parsley
- \* 2 tbsp freshly squeezed lemon juice
- \* 1½ tbsp extra virgin olive oil, plus extra to serve
- \* ½ tsp toasted and ground coriander seeds
- \* 3 tbsp Labneh (see *below*)
- \* 1½ cups Greek yogurt
- \* salt, to taste
- \* handful of purslane leaves, to garnish (optional)

1. Cut the cucumber in half lengthwise and seed it with a spoon, then slice thinly.
2. Place in a mixing bowl with everything but the labneh, yogurt, salt and purslane and mix well.
3. Now add the labneh and yogurt, mix together and season to taste with salt.
4. The tzatziki can be kept in the fridge, in a sterilized airtight container, for up to 4 days. To serve, garnish with purslane leaves (if using) and a drizzle of olive oil.

## Homemade labneh

### Makes 2¼ cups

*This sour creamy cheese is so easy to make and the taste is ten times better than any ready-made labneh out there. You can find versions of it throughout the Levant and using different*



*kinds of milk — from goats, sheep and cows. My personal favorite is made with cows' milk, as it's less intense in flavor than the other options and has a bright sourness to it. In the restaurant we use this for so many dishes and recipes, but my favorite is simply served with a bit of extra virgin olive oil, some Za'atar and fresh Pita (see p.229/not included) or other bread (I'm a sucker for carbs).*

\* 2½ cups Greek yogurt

\* 2½ cups natural low-fat yogurt

1. Place a double-layered 16-inch square of muslin over a sieve, spoon the yogurts into the middle, then bring the sides together and tie so that you have a nice bundle.
2. Make some space in the fridge and hang your bundle overnight with a small bowl underneath to collect the liquids. Your other option is to hang it outside somewhere (my mama used to hang it over the kitchen sink). Personally I prefer the fridge option, as I like to ensure that the cheese is perfectly chilled. Check it after 5–6 hours — you're looking for it to have stopped dripping.
3. The labneh can be kept in the fridge in a sterilized airtight container for up to 5 days. To serve, spoon into a bowl, make a nice well in the middle, season with the Za'atar Spice Mix and drizzle with olive oil. Grab some bread and...



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