

Bakla (broad bean and dill purée)

This wonderful appetizer was one of dozens of beautiful meze which Zeliha Irez cooked for us at her guesthouse in Turkey. The recipe is hers, and I have yet to make it myself at home. Let me know how it goes if you try it...



½ pint dried split broad beans (fava beans), picked over and rinsed

1½ pints water

1 smallish carrot, peeled and chopped into large pieces

1 medium onion, peeled and chopped into large pieces

1 medium potato, peeled and chopped into large pieces

1 tsp sugar

salt to taste

small bunch dill, finely chopped (reserve a few fronds for garnish)

good olive oil

medium hot bright red chilli flakes, preferably *Maraş* pepper

1. Place all ingredients except last three in a saucepan and boil, covered, until totally soft, stirring occasionally to prevent it sticking as it gets thicker. This will take approximately one hour
2. Push mixture through a sieve so that you have a smooth puree.
3. Mix in chopped dill and more salt if needed.
4. Brush small individual serving-sized ramekins with a little olive oil, then fill them with the broad bean puree. Level tops. Cover and chill for a couple of hours or overnight.
5. To serve: Bring bowls to room temperature then unmould onto serving plate(s). Gently warm some olive oil in a pan, remove from heat and mix in chilli flakes – the oil should go a lovely red colour. Drizzle chilli oil over broad bean mounds and garnish with dill fronds.