

# Pinto bean hummus

By Susie Iventosch



Photos Susie Iventosch

I am still on a hummus kick and this Pinto Bean Hummus is one of my new favorites! It's a creamy blend of pinto beans, tahini, cilantro, jalapeños, lime juice, and taco seasoning! It is a great side dish for tacos, enchiladas, or a fun dip for your next party. You can also use it as a base for a 7-Layer Dip!

This hummus is bold

and vibrant with the earthy flavor of pinto beans, combined with the fresh and zesty flavors of cilantro and jalapeño. The tahini adds a rich, nutty undertone, and the garlic and olive oil give it a smooth and savory depth. The taco seasoning infuses the hummus with a hint of smoky, spiced warmth. The result is a flavorful and delicious

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 tbsp. tahini
- 2 small garlic cloves, minced
- 1-2 tbsp. lime juice
- 1/2 small jalapeño, stem and seeds removed and finely diced
- 2 tbsp. cilantro leaves, minced
- 1 (19-oz.) can pinto beans, drained and rinsed (if you can only find a 15 oz. can, then just use one whole can and part of a second can.)
- 1-2 tbsp. cold water
- 1 tsp. taco seasoning blend
- 2 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil

### DIRECTIONS

Place tahini, garlic, cilantro leaves, jalapeño, and 1 tablespoon fresh lime juice in the bowl of your food processor. Process until smooth and scrape down sides of bowl with a rubber spatula.

Add the taco seasoning and 1/3 of the beans and process until as smooth as possible. Add 1-2 tablespoons very cold water and continue processing until the mixture is very smooth. Add the remaining pinto beans in two batches, processing until smooth with each batch. Finally, add olive oil and blend.

Season to taste with more lime juice as desired. Garnish with cilantro leaves and a lime wedge and serve with your favorite tortilla or pita chips.

spread with a perfect balance of heat, tanginess, and richness. As with any hummus, feel free to add more seasoning, jalapeño, cilantro, or lime juice to suit your own tastes.

I love a smooth hummus, but it's not always

easy to achieve. Even after researching and studying the subject at length, it's still a bit baffling as to what exactly makes hummus creamy. Some say that you must first process the tahini all by itself, others say adding ice water makes it

creamy, while others say it's simply the brand of food processor you use, with Ninja and Vitamix being the top choices. I've tried all of these and still don't have the perfect answer. The best solution I have discovered is to add a tablespoon or two

of very cold water after processing the first one-third or so of beans. This allows the rest of the beans to process without becoming too lumpy.

If you have a great answer to this quandary, I would love to hear how you make your hummus extra-creamy!



Susie can be reached at [suziventosch@gmail.com](mailto:suziventosch@gmail.com). This recipe can be found on our website: [www.lamorindaweekly.com](http://www.lamorindaweekly.com). If you would like to share your favorite recipe with Susie please contact her by email or call our office at (925) 377-0977. Or visit <https://treksandbites.com>

# Lafayette Community Garden busy as a beehive at Harvest Festival

By Elaine Borden Chandler



Photo Elaine Borden Chandler

Marilyn Borchardt explaining how LCG grows long beans during the garden tour.

Down the road from the Lafayette Reservoir lies the Lafayette Community Garden and Outdoor Learning Center (LCG), a quiet, fenced garden that most Lamorinda residents drive by but have never entered.

But on the hot Sunday of September 8th, a sign on the gate proclaimed "Welcome to the Harvest Festival" and admitted a stream of new visitors.

First opened in 2012, the LCG is a cooperative vegetable garden, where members tend to crops that are then communally shared. Every year they have a Harvest Festival where they open their doors to visitors for a day of celebration and learning. This year's topic, The Joy of Bees, was inspired by the beehives that LCG keeps and the importance of bees in plant life.

Two tours were given around the gar-

den. The first was given by Marilyn Borchardt, dressed in lively green overalls, who explained the garden and its history as she was peppered with questions by the visitors — which included a group of Master Gardeners.

The tour wound through the raised beds of fruits and vegetables that the LHC is centered around, currently filled with tomatoes, potatoes, cucumbers, spinach, summer squash, and grapes. Borchardt described the variety of techniques used to grow the vegetables, including compost tea, watering schedules, mesh cages, and plastic borders to keep out vermin.

She led visitors past the chicken coop, Charlie's Shed where all tools are stored and in-house repairs are done, a central area filled with various booths for the festival, and into the back

area, where there is a Miwok village and a beehive area — all this while covering topics ranging from the origin of the garden's labyrinth to the right time to harvest acorns.

The tour ended at the Miwok Village, where Kristin Gaylord and Bruce Moen talked about the Miwok and Saklan people who have lived in the Lafayette area since time immemorial and how the Miwok village is used as an education tool for third grade students. "They get to crush acorns and turn them into powder and run water through them. They just love it all," said Moen.

No acorns were served at this Harvest Festival, but instead a table covered with food made by garden members — including four different kinds of brownies, coffee cake,

yuzu compote quick bread, three varieties of apple, sourdough bread with soft butter, melon, iced tea, and lemonade.

Two of the members, Lynn Jones, an LHC co-director, and Beth Caldwell, served food, recommended activities, and informed visitors that the beehives at LCG are maintained by the Mount Diablo Beekeeper Association (MDBA) and that MDBA had a table with honey tasting. The honeys ranged from Walnut Creek Spring to Moraga Late Season to Italian Chestnut.

After the second of three raffles, Jana Thomas gave a quick introduction speech on the history of LHC from when it was EBMUD's refuse heap to today. "One of the things that we really want to do is encourage community members to come visit us, treat us like a park," she said. "We continue to grow and change, but we would love to embrace everyone in the broader community."

Then Jamie Frankenfield and Peter Kritscher of the MDBA gave a talk on honeybees, discussing honeybee evolution, how honeybees came to America, their physiology, their eusociality, and how they have floral fidelity — they only visit one type of plant during a foraging trip — which makes them vital to crop productions.

"Folks, just look around," said Frankenfield. "There'll be bees in all directions, looking for something in that area. I love that stuff. I stay awake at night thinking about that stuff — it's so amazing."



Visitors of all ages learn about hens at the chicken coop.

Then Linda Mizes gave a talk on the native bees of California, explaining that there are 1600 species but most of them have not been studied because they pollinate native flowers and not industrialized crops. At this time of year, many of them have gone into holes for the winter because most native California flowers have stopped blooming. "In the fall when the rains come, be careful not to completely dig up all your garden. You might be digging up some of these holes," she reminded the audience.

After the talks, Cathy Pretti, a first-time visitor to the LCG, enthused, "I wish I brought a notebook, there was so much that I wanted to remember."

In addition to MDBA table and the native bee table, there were tables for the Master Gardeners giving advice on everything from dealing with aphids to root care, making folded paper

bees, and Recycle Smart. At the Recycle Smart table, Marian Woodard exhibited bin composting and vermiculture, or worm composting. She showed visitors how easily they could start a worm bin with a 10-gallon bucket, and many who stopped at her table left clutching pamphlets on worms.

As the end time of 2:00 approached, visitors made their last visits, took the free bouquets of dried flowers and lunaria, grabbed their last snacks, and wandered away.

The current visiting hours for the LCG are Tuesday 9-11, Thursday 9-12, and Saturday 9-12. These times change but are always posted on a sign on the garden's gate. LCG membership is full for 2024 but they are accepting applications for 2025. Applications can be found at their website <https://lafayetecommunitygarden.org/>.

# Letters to the editor ... continued

Carl Anduri for Lafayette City Council

Lafayette's Carl Anduri grew up in the San Joaquin Valley, attended Stanford, went to Yale Law School, taught school for a year and then...

Well then he married Sharon Woodnutt Anduri, a Lafayette resident who attended K-12 schools here. Nice move Carl! But he became even smarter after that—he moved to Lafayette with Sharon and they raised their two girls here.

Besides working at a San Francisco law firm, he decided to volunteer in town, including our Planning Commission and the City Council. Carl has a gift for understanding how our City works and is governed. He understands how California's Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) works with respect to projects brought before the City Council. Carl carefully studies both sides of an issue

whether it be a local permit application or something coming down from our State and helps guide it to a fair conclusion.

Over the past four years we have had several "matters" coming from the State regarding housing. Many of you have been gathering and studying the issues and presenting your results to the City Council. Carl has been a knowledgeable, important and constant figure on our City Council. We need to maintain our downtown and neighborhoods while complying with these new State mandates.

I have been a teacher and am a lawyer. Carl is someone I would have liked to have worked with in both areas. His performance on the Planning Commission and on the City Council have been a true gift to our City. Carl Anduri should continue to serve on the City

Council.

He definitely has my vote and I urge you to vote for Carl Anduri for City Council.

Sincerely,  
Susan Price Callister  
Lafayette

Orinda City Council

It's time for a fresh new perspective on the Orinda City Council and that is why I am supporting Candace Evans for City Council. As a long term volunteer in our community I appreciate the efforts of all the Council members but I feel it is time for a change and Candace is the dynamo that can do that. Candace has a long history of political activism and practical experience as she currently is Council Liaison in the Oakland City Clerk's Office. She is a dynamo from Generation X

and will be the first Afro-American and member of the LBGITQ Community to serve. Candace will be a strong advocate for seniors, recreational programs (including the creeks, Orinda Nature Area and development of a dog park), supports the MCE energy alternative, creating a more vibrant downtown, expansion of fire prevention and infrastructure under Measure R, and I guarantee you she will fight racism, discrimination and for social justice. If you are tired of the status quo and want someone who will give her all, I urge you to vote Candace Evans for City Council! Come to Candidate Night in Orinda on Oct. 7 and find out for yourself or visit <http://www.voteevans.net>. Steven Danziger Orinda