Ember-Packet Chickpeas with Fennel and Tomatoes

2 vegetable-and-bean packets with pita · Active 25 min · Total 1 hr 35 min

Skills: Confident beginner

Ingredients

- 1 can chickpeas (15 oz/425 g), drained and rinsed to yield about 1 1/3 cups (240 g)
- 1 medium fennel bulb, trimmed, hard core removed and very thinly sliced (250 g prepared weight)
- 9 oz cherry tomatoes, halved (250 g)
- 1 small onion, very thinly sliced (100 g)
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped (3 g)
- 1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon olive oil (20 ml)
- 1/4 cup low-sodium vegetable stock (60 ml)
- 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme (0.5 g)
- 1/4 teaspoon fine salt (1.5 g)
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper (0.5 g)
- 2 small pitas (100 g total), to serve

Set out

Permitted campfire and suitable stable cooking grate used outdoors, Heavy-duty food-grade foil, Long tongs and heatproof gloves, Knife and board, Clean plates

Allergens

Wheat in pita; check stock for celery and other allergens. Check labels and substitutions.

Timing

Includes roughly 40–45 minutes to establish embers; preparation overlaps. Wind, fuel, restrictions and equipment can change the total substantially.

Make it

1. Check that a fire is permitted and prepare it in the approved outdoor location. Allow about 40–45 minutes, or longer as necessary, for steady moderate embers beneath a suitable stable grate. Follow campsite rules and equipment instructions; never use this setup indoors or in a camper.

2. Cut four foil sheets about 18 inches (45 cm) square and make two double-layer stacks. Divide chickpeas, thin fennel, tomatoes, onion and garlic between the centers. Add half the oil, stock, thyme, salt and pepper to each.

3. Bring long edges together above the food, fold several times to seal, then fold short ends upward. Leave steam space. Set seam-side up on the grate over moderate embers, away from direct flames.

4. Cook for 30–40 minutes, rotating packet positions with long tongs if needed. Open a corner carefully away from face and hands. The fennel should be tender when pierced and the filling steaming hot. Reseal and cook longer if needed.

5. Warm pitas briefly in a clean safe position on the grate. Open packets onto plates and serve one per person with a pita, keeping hands away from the escaping steam.

Have a no-fire alternative selected

An outdoor recipe depends on conditions and permission. If the fire cannot be used safely, choose another meal using the camper’s approved appliance rather than moving the fire equipment under cover.

A useful detail

The 95-minute estimate includes time to establish suitable embers, with preparation overlapping. Conditions vary; cook according to safe equipment use and vegetable tenderness, not the clock alone.

Keep it well

Remove leftovers from foil and refrigerate promptly in shallow containers within 2 hours, or 1 hour above 90°F/32°C. Keep at 40°F/4°C or below for up to 3 days and reheat to 165°F/74°C. Keep pitas dry and separate. If no safe cold storage is available, cook only the amount that will be eaten at once.