

[Read the following text:](#)

## **What is the Middle East's most iconic food?**

Whether eaten in a pita or laffa, with hummus or tahini, falafel is a symbol for the Middle Eastern region and its culinary traditions

Falafel is certainly one of the most iconic foods to come out of the Middle East, but what exactly are falafels made of? And are they healthy?

Falafels are a Middle Eastern deep-fried ball fritter made of ground chickpeas and beans. Falafels are also made with other ingredients like garlic, cumin, coriander and parsley. They typically serve it in sandwich form, either in a pita or a laffa wrap. Vegetables like cucumber, tomatoes and pickles, as well as sauces like hummus or tahini usually accompany the meal.

Falafel is typically seen as a street or fast food and it is extremely popular. The exact history of falafel is murky and controversial and although many people think so, falafel is not exclusively Israeli - in fact, it almost certainly didn't originate there. Many scholars believe Falafels were first made in Egypt.

Overall, the best way to describe falafel is as a Middle Eastern cuisine. In Arab countries, falafel is eaten for religious reasons as part of the iftar meal during Ramadan. Among Christians in the region, falafel is very popular during Lent. No nation owns falafel, but the humble dish has remained a core part of the local Israeli cuisine.

Chickpeas are widely seen as a superfood, being high in protein. Chickpeas are low fat and have no cholesterol, and falafel overall has soluble fiber that helps lower

blood cholesterol. But while falafel may inherently be low fat, that all changes in the frying process, which causes it to absorb a considerable amount of fat.

According to a study conducted by an Israeli restaurant delivery company, the best falafel in the world can be found in Israel. In order to prove their findings, the company looked at the cities around the world with the best falafel. It gave Haifa the highest score of 9.07 out of 10 making it the best place to eat falafel in the world. Tel Aviv followed it. Jerusalem and Beirut took third place followed by Amsterdam, Brussels, Athens, Berlin, Lisbon, and Copenhagen and Dublin. Not everyone will agree with this study but most people can agree that it is a matter of personal taste.

### Reading Comprehension

Answer the following questions about the text:

1. What is falafel made of?

- A. Pitta
- B. Chickpeas
- C. Ball fritter

2. What sauce is mentioned in the text?

- A. Ketchup
- B. Parsley
- C. Hummus

3. What do Many scholars believe?

- A. That falafel is exclusively Israeli.
- B. That falafel started out in Egypt.
- C. That falafel is eaten for religious reasons.

4. What is the “iftar”?

- A. A meal
- B. A lent
- C. A region

5. Why are chickpeas considered a superfood?

- A. Because they are eaten for religious reasons.
- B. Because they contain a lot of protein.
- C. Because they absorb a considerable amount of fat.

6. What does soluble fiber do?

- A. It lowers blood cholesterol.
- B. It helps blood cholesterol.
- C. It prevents blood cholesterol.

7. What happens in the frying process?

- A. The falafel absorbs protein.
- B. The falafel absorbs cholesterol.
- C. The falafel absorbs oil.

8. Who conducted the study that is mentioned in the last paragraph?

- A. An Israeli restaurant
- B. A delivery company

9. What did the study find?

- A. The location of the best falafel in the world.
- B. That people don't always agree with each other.
- C. A list of cities around the world.

10. To what place did the falafel in Tel Aviv reach?

- A. Third
- B. First
- C. Second

## Vocabulary

Write “synonyms” or “opposites” next to each sentence:

1. “Certainly” and “absolutely” are \_\_\_\_\_.
2. “Typically” and “usually” are \_\_\_\_\_.
3. “Fast” and “slow” are \_\_\_\_\_.
4. “Extremely” and “highly” are \_\_\_\_\_.
5. “Controversial” and “agreeable” are \_\_\_\_\_.
6. “Part” and “whole” are \_\_\_\_\_.
7. “Best” and “worst” are \_\_\_\_\_.

## Grammar

1. Fill in the missing verbs in the PAST SIMPLE tense:

- A. Falafel \_\_\_\_\_ (to come) out of the Middle East.

- B. I \_\_\_\_\_ (to make) falafel out of ground chickpeas and beans.
- C. People \_\_\_\_\_ (to see) falafel as a street or fast food.
- D. The exact history of falafel \_\_\_\_\_ (to be) murky and controversial.
- E. Many people \_\_\_\_\_ (to think) that falafel \_\_\_\_\_ (to be) an Israeli dish.
- F. The dish we \_\_\_\_\_ (to eat) was delicious and it \_\_\_\_\_ (to have) no cholesterol.
- G. They \_\_\_\_\_ (to find) a place that \_\_\_\_\_ (to sell) great falafel.

2. Rewrite the following sentences in the ACTIVE VOICE:

- A. Falafel is eaten in a pita or laffa.
- B. Falafel is made of chickpeas.
- C. Falafel is served in a sandwich form.
- D. Falafel is usually accompanied by a salad.
- E. Falafel is typically seen as a street or fast food.
- F. Falafel is not owned by any nation.
- G. Chickpeas are considered a superfood.

H. Blood cholesterol is lowered thanks to soluble fiber.

I. A considerable amount of fat is absorbed in the frying process.

J. The study was conducted by an Israeli restaurant delivery company.