



# RILEY'S RAINFOREST

"Send down... from the clouds of Thy mercy the rains of Thy healing..." —Bahá'u'lláh

## A Big Helping of Unity

What do a birthday party, a picnic, and a wedding all have in common? They're events where people get together, have fun—and eat delicious food.

Everybody needs food to generate energy for work and play. But food is more than an energy source, like batteries for your camera. In every culture, food helps build unity among families and communities.

Have your parents ever made your favorite dish to celebrate an accomplishment or honor a special event? Food can convey family love. In Japan, mothers prepare boxed lunches called *obento* for their kids. The foods are often formed into shapes like animals or flowers.



Some researchers have found that dining with your family can have dramatic effects. Teens who rarely eat dinner with their families are 72% more likely to use alcohol,



cigarettes, and illegal drugs. Teens who almost always eat family dinners are 31% less likely to try these dangerous behaviors.\*

Gathering to share food is also important in many religions.

Bahá'ís celebrate the Nineteen Day Feast, which includes food and socializing. For the Jewish Sabbath, a prayer is said over a sweet bread called *challah*.

Many Christians share bread in honor of the Last Supper that Jesus had with His followers.

The next time you're enjoying a meal, think about who prepared the food and why. A friend or family member may be nourishing your spirit as well as your body.

## Explore and Soar

### DELICIOUS HUMMUS

Try this popular, tasty dip from the Middle East.\*\* You'll need:

- 1 large can chickpeas (garbanzo beans) OR 2 cups boiled chickpeas, drained
- 2 cloves garlic (optional)
- 1/2 cup tahini (sesame butter)
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- 3 tablespoons hot water
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- Salt (to taste)
- Cumin (optional)
- Chopped parsley (optional)



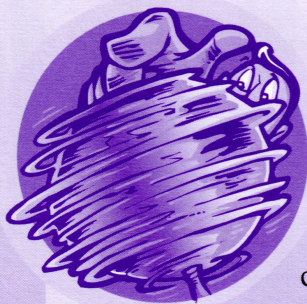
What you do:

Rinse beans with water. Mash them into a paste with a fork, potato masher, or food processor (works best). Mash garlic and add salt and lemon juice to it. Add garlic mixture and tahini to beans, and mix well. If hummus is dry, add hot water. Place hummus on a plate. Sprinkle with a bit of cumin and parsley for decoration. Pour olive oil on top. Serve with pita bread.

## Fruit for Thought

"As a city is the home of all its inhabitants although each may have his individual place . . . so the earth's surface is one wide native land or home for all races of humankind."

—'Abdu'l-Bahá



## Curiosity Canopy

Did you know that you can take your family on a week-long journey without leaving home? Spin a globe and stop it with one finger. Wherever your finger lands is where you'll "visit." Learn phrases in the language, try out a recipe, read a book, or watch a movie about the country. How is the culture like yours? How is it different?