

Reshteh Polo (رشه پلو, Noodle Rice)

Symbolic of a new beginning in life

Most Armenians and Assyrians traditionally celebrate Christmas. This is one of the rice dishes that they make for lunch at Christmas, accompanied by turkey, chicken or lamb.

Method

Preparing the rice:

Place a colander (with fine mesh or very small holes) in your sink ready to drain the rice.

Bring 7 cups of water to the boil in a non-stick pan (10 cup capacity with a lid) and add 1 tsp salt.

Tip the rice into the boiling water and add the noodles. Be careful not to let the mixture boil over.

When the rice mixture starts to boil, lower the heat to medium-high and occasionally stir the rice gently in a circular motion.

Taste a grain of rice and once it is cooked al dente, drain the rice in the colander.

Preparing the dried fruit mixture:

Cut the onion in half and slice. Add 4 tsp oil to a pan and warm on medium-high heat. Fry the onion until golden brown and caramelised, then remove from the pan and set aside.

Place the dates in the same pan and stir for a minute before turning off the heat. Add the orange marmalade, half of the caramelised onion and the dissolved saffron, mix and set aside.

Completing the recipe:

Put 3 tsp oil in a pan and cover with the tortilla. Add a quarter of the rice/noodle mixture and cover this with a third of the raisin mixture. Repeat twice, ending with the final rice/noodle layer.

Poke some holes in the rice and pour 2-3 tsp of oil evenly over the top. Cover the pan with a sheet of kitchen roll and put the lid on tightly. Steam for 45 minutes on medium heat.

Scoop out the mixture, a spatula at a time, into the serving dish (keeping the tah-dig intact at the bottom of the pot). Sprinkle the other half of the caramelised onion on top of the rice dish as a garnish.

Use a wooden spatula to loosen and remove the tah-dig and serve in the same dish or separately.

Bon appetit and نوش جان



Shopping list (4-6 servings)

1½ cups basmati rice

Salt

113 g/4 oz roasted noodles, broken into 3 cm /1 inch-long pieces

Vegetable oil

1 large onion (340 g / 12 oz) or 6 tsp caramelised onion

1 cup of golden raisins

12 high-quality dates, pitted and cut in half lengthways

3 tsp orange marmalade

A smidgen of ground saffron dissolved in 3 tsp hot water

For the “tah-dig”:

1 flour tortilla (large enough to cover the bottom of the pan)



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One in a series of recipes contributed by our volunteers

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