

rice with green beans and meatballs (loobiya polo)

prep time 10 minutes
cooking time 30-40 minutes
serves 4 people



ingredients

400g (2 cups) Basmati rice
200g (2 cups) trimmed green beans
200g (7oz) store-bought meatballs of your choice- beef, pork, lamb or mixed
large onion, finely chopped 1
45g (3 tbsp) tomato paste
120ml (8 tbsp) vegetable oil
salt and pepper
optionally, a generous sprinkle of cinnamon and ground dried rose petals

preparation

to make the sauce, heat 4 tbsp of oil in a large frying pan
add the chopped onion and fry for 3 minutes until translucent and slightly coloured
add turmeric and tomato paste and fry for 1 minute
add the trimmed green beans to the pan and fry for 2 minutes
add a cup of water, put the lid on and let it simmer away until the green beans are soft
add the meatballs and let them cook for another 5-7 minutes
soak the rice in a pot containing hot water and 2 heaped tablespoons of salt
cover and set aside to soften for at least 20 minutes
Iranians sometimes soak their rice overnight; this reduces the cooking time considerably
bring a litre of water to a boil in a large saucepan
make sure it is big enough to contain the rice, which will double in volume when cooked
pour the soaking water of the rice away and add the soaked rice to the boiling water
cook only until the rice grains are half-cooked
to be sure, press a rice grain between two fingers; it should be soft on the outside but hard in the middle
strain the rice and set aside
heat 60ml (4tbsp) of oil in the saucepan you cooked the rice in
when the oil is piping hot, prepare your tahdig
you can use potato slices or flatbread to cover the bottom of the pan
add some salt and then layer your rice by adding two spatulas of rice over the tahdig spreading it evenly
sprinkle ground cinnamon and ground dried rose petals evenly on top of the rice
spoon a third of the sauce over the rice
repeat the layers until you run out of each, making sure to save enough rice for the top layer
make some holes with the handle of the spatula
pour in 125ml (½ cup) of water around the edge of the pot
reduce to medium heat and put the lid on
when steam starts to seep from beneath the lid, spoon a generous knob of butter on top of the rice
cover and lower the heat
cook for another 15 minutes