

A recipe from

DAD'S CHILE COOKBOOK



Heat Rating:



Saffron Rice with Lamb-Tomato Curry

As Seen in "660 Curries" by Raghavan Iyer

A biryani good enough for Sunday dinner with the in-laws...

For the Lamb Curry

*1 lb boneless lamb, in 1-inch cubes
2 Tbsp ginger paste
1 Tbsp garlic paste
2 Tbsp canola or vegetable oil
1 can (15 oz) tomato sauce
1 cup fried onion paste
1 ½ tsp sweet paprika
½ tsp cayenne powder
1 ½ tsp kosher salt
½ tsp ground turmeric
1 tsp Punjabi Garam Masala
1 cup water*

For the Rice

*1 cup basmati rice
2 Tbsp ghee or butter
1 tsp cumin seeds
2 black cardamom pods
2 bay leaves
2 cinnamon sticks, in pieces
1 small red onion, in slivers
½ tsp saffron threads
1 tsp kosher salt*

For the Pastry Lid

*1 sheet frozen puff pastry, thawed
all-purpose flour, for dusting*

Combine lamb, ginger and garlic pastes in a bowl and toss to coat. Cover and chill for 30 minutes, or overnight. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add lamb and pastes and cook, stirring, until the meat sears and begins to brown, about 8-10 minutes. While lamb is browning, whisk together tomato sauce, onion paste, chile powders, salt, turmeric and masala with water. When lamb is browned, add sauce to deglaze; scrape up any browned bits with a wooden spoon. Reduce heat to simmer and cook for 25-30 minutes, until lamb is tender.

While lamb is cooking, place rice in a medium bowl and fill with water to cover rice. Gently rub (but don't break) grains with your fingers, to clean surfaces. Drain and repeat 3-4 times, until water remains clear. Let stand about 1 hour to soften rice.

Heat ghee in a medium saucepan over medium-high heat. Sprinkle in cumin, cardamom, bay and cinnamon stick pieces. Cook about 20 seconds, then add onion and stir-fry until light brown, 3-5 minutes. Stir in saffron for about a minute, then add drained rice. Toss gently, then add 1 cup cold water and salt. Bring to a boil and cook until water evaporates from surface, 5-8 minutes. Remove from heat.

Heat oven to 350° F and prepare a casserole with non-stick spray. Spoon half the curry into the casserole and spread evenly. Add half the rice, and spread evenly. Repeat. Roll out the pastry to a rectangle about 10 by 12 inches. Drape pastry over casserole and seal securely around edges. Bake for 35-45 minutes, or until pastry is golden brown.

Transfer to table trivet and serve by spooning generous portions of all layers onto diners' plates.

Yield: Six servings

Preparation time: 40 minutes

Cooking time: 2 hours

