

DFW Recipes and Cuisine Template

Program Month and Year: April 2012

Organization: Afghan Friends Network

Recipes

Toasted Turmeric Cashews

1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
1 1/2 tablespoons ground turmeric
1 1/2 tablespoons kosher salt (adjust to your taste)
1 pound unsalted, dry-roasted cashews

Heat a wok or large sauté pan over medium-high heat. Add oil, turmeric and salt; quickly stir to make a paste. Immediately add the cashews and stir-fry for 1 minute, turning the cashews in the pan to coat with the spices but don't burn them. Pour into a colander. Shake the colander for 1 minute to eliminate extra spices; you may need to brush off extra coating of turmeric. Let cool and store in a jar with a tight lid.

Note: Trader Joe's has well-priced and really fresh cashews.

Tomato, Cucumber and Red Onion Salad

Salata

3 medium-size tomatoes, diced
3 Persian cucumbers, peeled and diced (about 1 cup)*
1 small red onion, diced
1 cup roughly chopped cilantro (1 small bunch)
3 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
1 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. ground black pepper
Combine all of the ingredients and toss well.

*you can substitute other varieties of cucumbers; European cucumbers (long, thin) work well!

Aush *Afghan Noodle Soup*

We sometimes add a few handfuls of chopped spinach or Swiss chard when the pasta is nearly cooked for extra color and nutrition.

1 small yellow onion, finely chopped
1 tbsp. olive oil
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 lb. ground beef or ground turkey can be a fine substitute
1 ½ tsp. ground coriander
1 1/2 tsp. paprika
1 tsp. salt
½ tsp. ground black pepper
2 tbsp. tomato paste mixed with 2 tbsp. hot water
7 oz uncooked spaghetti (doesn't have to be exact)
10 cups chicken broth
1 15 oz. can kidney beans
1 15 oz. can garbanzo beans
1 pint plain yogurt
Dried mint (optional)

Instructions:

Saute the onion in olive oil in a non-stick frying pan on low heat until tender and golden. Add the garlic and sauté another 2 minutes. Add the ground beef and use a spoon to break it up as it cooks so it is loose and separated (like taco meat).

Once the beef is browned add the coriander, paprika, salt, pepper and tomato paste. Mix everything well and continue to cook over low heat for about 15 minutes.

While the meat is cooking, pour the chicken broth into a large pot and bring to a boil. Add the spaghetti and boil for 5 minutes. Empty the beans into a colander and rinse with water. Add the beans to the spaghetti and continue to cook until the pasta is done.

To assemble, put 2 ladles of noodles and broth and 2 spoonfuls of beef into a deep serving bowl. Finish with 1 or 2 spoonful of yogurt on top and sprinkle some dried mint. Give it a stir and eat.

Aushak

Afghan Lamb Dumplings

4 tbsp. olive oil, divided
1 large yellow onion, finely chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 lb. ground lamb
1 cup tomato sauce
1 ½ tsp. paprika
1 ½ tsp. ground coriander
3 teaspoons kosher salt, divided
½ teaspoon black pepper
1 lb. green onions, washed, stems removed
½ teaspoons crushed red pepper flakes (optional)
1 package wonton wrappers

1 tsp. vinegar
1 cup plain yogurt
½ teaspoon ground dried garlic
1 tbsp. dried mint

Sauté the onion over medium heat in 3 tablespoons of the olive oil until tender and translucent. Add the garlic and sauté another minute. Add the lamb and sauté until cooked through, breaking it up like finely minced taco meat. Add the tomato sauce, 1 1/2 teaspoons of the salt, the paprika, coriander and pepper. Cook over low heat, stirring regularly for 20 minutes.

While the meat is cooking, finely chop the green onions (use the entire onion). A Cuisinart is useful for this step. Heat the remaining tablespoon of olive oil in a sauté pan over medium heat and add the green onions, 1 teaspoon of the salt, and the crushed red pepper. Turn heat to low and sauté until tender, 10 minutes.

To assemble the dumplings, fill a small bowl with water and put it at your work station. Set a wonton wrapper on your work surface and dip the tip of your finger in the water. Moisten the edges along two connecting sides of the wrapper. The water will serve as glue for the dumpling. Put about a teaspoon of green onions in the center of the wrapper. Fold the dough in half over the green onion in the shape of a triangle. Use the tip of your finger to firmly press the edges of the dough together to form a tight seal. Next, lift the two longest points of the triangle and press them together, creating a little circle over the dumpling. It will look like a fancy napkin fold.

While you are assembling the dumplings, bring a large pot of water to a gentle boil. Add the vinegar. Once all of the dumplings are done, immerse them in the water and boil according to directions on the wonton package (about 4 minutes). While the dumplings are boiling, quickly stir together the yogurt with the garlic and the remaining ½ teaspoon of salt.

Gingerly scoop the cooked dumplings out of the water with a slotted spoon, a few at a time, and arrange on a large platter. Spoon the yogurt over the dumplings and the ground meat on top of that. Sprinkle with dried mint and serve immediately.

Makes 25 dumplings.

Afghanistan's National Dish ***Qabili Palau***

3 cups basmati rice
5 skinless chicken legs
5 skinless chicken thighs
2 large yellow onions, peeled and quartered
½ c plus 2 tbsp. olive oil or vegetable oil, divided
5 tsp. salt

1 cup chicken broth
3 large carrots, peeled
1 cup black raisins
½ cup slivered almonds
3 tbsp. sugar
¾ cup water
2 tsp. ground cumin
1 ½ tsp. ground cardamom
½ tsp. ground black pepper
12 cups water
2 tsp. browning sauce such as Kitchen Bouquet (optional)*

Instructions:

Preheat the oven to 500 degrees.

Immerse rice in a bowl of water and drain in a colander. Repeat this step 3 times.

Wash and dry the chicken. Set aside.

Chop the onions in a food processor using the pulse button. Don't puree the onions. You can do this by hand, if you prefer.

Choose a sauté pan that is at least a couple inches deep and large enough to fit all the chicken. Pour ½ cup of the oil in the pan and sauté the onions over high heat, stirring quickly, until brown (5-10 minutes). Don't burn them. Add the chicken to the pan and sprinkle with 3 tsp. of the salt. Cook the chicken over medium-high heat for 6 minutes, turning from time to time so all sides turn golden brown. The onion will start to caramelize and turn into a thick sauce. Add 1/4 cup of the chicken broth, and continue stirring to keep the chicken from burning. Once the liquid has been absorbed, add another 1/4 cup of, bring it to a boil, cover with a lid or aluminum foil, and simmer for 10 minutes. The sauce should turn a dark brown. If your sauce does not take on a dark color you can add the Kitchen Bouquet to give it color.

While the chicken is cooking, cut the carrots into long matchsticks, about 4 inches long and 1/8-inch thick. Make sure that they are not too thin. In a large frying pan add ¾ cups of water and bring to a boil, add the carrots and cook until tender and a deep orange hue, 5 to 7 minutes. Keep a close eye on this to make sure you do not overcook them. Once the carrots are done, drain any leftover liquid out of the pan. Add the remaining 2 tbsp of oil, raisins, almonds and sugar to the carrots. Stir quickly over medium-high heat and keep stirring for about 3 minutes. The raisins will look plump; the carrots will take on a nice sweet flavor. Remove from heat and package the carrots into a sealed aluminum foil pouch about the size of a small paperback novel.

Remove the chicken pieces from the broth and set aside. Stir the cumin, cardamom and black pepper into the broth. Continue to cook on low for 5 minutes to allow it to thicken.

Meanwhile, measure 12 cups of water and the remaining 2 tsp. of salt into a large Dutch oven or pot with a fitted lid. Bring it to a boil. Add the rice to the water and boil until it is al dente (nearly cooked, though still slightly crunchy). This will take just a few minutes depending on the rice you use. You will have to taste it to check for doneness. Do not overcook it.

Immediately strain the rice through a colander. Put the rice back into its cooking pot and add the broth. Mix well. Arrange the chicken pieces on top of the rice. Set the aluminum package of carrots on top of the rice. This will keep the carrots warm and deepen the flavors without mixing with the rice yet.

Bake the rice for 15 minutes in 500 degrees then drop the temperature down to 250 degrees. Cook for another 20 minutes.

Arrange the chicken pieces on a large platter, cover with the rice. Sprinkle the carrots, raisins, and almonds on the rice. Serve with a simple salad.

Serves 6-8

Humaira's Creamy Cardamom Rice Pudding

1/2 cup Calrose rice
1 1/2 cups whole milk
1 tablespoon butter
1/3 cup sugar
1/2 teaspoon ground cardamom
Dash cinnamon
2 tablespoons slivered almonds (optional)

Makes four servings

Preheat oven to 250 degrees.

Put the rice, milk, butter, sugar, and cardamom in a medium pot with an oven-proof lid. Stir well, put on the lid and cook in the oven for 1 hour. After an hour, remove from the oven, stir, and continue to bake an additional 30 to 45 minutes until the pudding is creamy and moist, and the rice is tender. Don't overcook and let it dry out.

Let it cool for 10 minutes with the lid on. Spoon into serving bowls, sprinkle a little cinnamon on top and serve. This is my new favorite rice pudding! Simple and so delicious!

Afghan Sundaee

Falooda

2 ounces thin rice vermicelli or glass noodles

¼ cup simple syrup*
1 ¼ tsp. rosewater
3 cups ice
1 quart premium vanilla ice cream
¼ cup unsalted, chopped, toasted pistachios

Cook the noodles according to package directions and cool to room temperature. You can do this by running cold water over the noodles.

In a small bowl, mix together the simple syrup and rosewater.

Put the ice into the bowl of a food processor fitted with a metal blade and process until the ice is finely chopped.

Set out four serving bowls. Put ½ cup chopped ice into each bowl. Set 1/3 cup cooked noodles over the ice in each bowl. Top the noodles with 2 scoops of vanilla ice cream. Drizzle 2 teaspoons of the simple syrup over each bowl of ice cream. Sprinkle 1 tablespoon of nuts over each sundae. Serve immediately.

*To make your own simple syrup combine 1 cup water and 1 cup granulated sugar in a small saucepan. Bring to a boil, stirring regularly, and boil for 5 minutes. Set the syrup in the refrigerator to cool. Refrigerate the leftover syrup in a jar with a fitted lid. It will keep for a month and is useful as a sweetener for cold beverages such as iced tea and lemonade.

Sources

All recipes are compliments of Humaira Ghilzai of the Afghan Friends Network, from her food blog Afghan Culture Unveiled at www.afghancooking.net .