

Abgusht

4 pounds (2kg) boned leg of lamb, save bone
5 large onions, chopped
1 teaspoon turmeric
10 cups water
1 cup yellow split peas
1 teaspoon paprika
4 teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon ground black pepper
5 large potatoes, peeled and quartered
7 tomatoes, sliced
2 tablespoons tomato paste
1 dried lime
2 strands saffron dissolved in 7 tablespoons hot water
*2 teaspoons advieh**

**Optional: equal amounts crushed rose petals, cardamom, cinnamon, and cumin, mixed*

Brown meat, 1 onion, and turmeric in a large stockpot. Add water, split peas, paprika, and bone. Lower heat and simmer, covered, for 2 hours. Add remaining ingredients. Simmer, covered, for 40 minutes. Remove bone. Remove all vegetables and meat, and mash them together in a large bowl. Serve mash in a separate bowl alongside remaining broth.

Chelow

3 cups uncooked, long-grain basmati rice

6 cups water

2 tablespoons salt

½ cup olive oil

Place rice in a large bowl and wash under lukewarm water.

Drain, then repeat two more times. Bring water and salt to a boil in a stockpot. Add clean rice, cover, and cook for 30 minutes, or until al dente. In another large pot, heat oil. Spread an inch-thick layer of cooked rice at the bottom of the second pot. Slowly scoop cooked rice into the pot, forming a pyramid shape so that the top layer is the point. Cover and cook on low heat for 30 minutes. *Tadig* will form at the bottom.

Baklava

4 cups brown sugar

1 cup water

1/2 cup rosewater

1 pound (500g) shelled pistachios, chopped

1 pound (500g) blanched almonds, chopped

2 tablespoons ground cardamom

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

15 frozen phyllo pastry sheets

1/2 cup unsalted butter, melted

Bring 2 cups of sugar, water, and rosewater to a boil in a medium saucepan. Set aside to cool. Grind pistachios, almonds, cardamom, cinnamon, and remaining 2 cups of sugar in a food processor for 1 minute. Set aside. Lay 5 sheets of buttered phyllo pastry into a greased 13-by-9-inch pan. Spread a thin, even layer of nut mixture, then cover with 5 more buttered sheets of pastry. Repeat until all mixture is used. Cover with 5 more buttery sheets. With a sharp knife, cut across and diagonally to form diamond shapes. Bake in oven at 350°F (180°C) for 1 hour. Pour cooled sugar and rosewater syrup over top. Let cool before serving.

Red Lentil Soup

2 cups dry red lentils
7 large onions, chopped
7 garlic cloves, crushed
1 teaspoon ground turmeric
4 teaspoons ground cumin
Olive oil
7 cups chicken broth
3 cups water
Salt
*2 teaspoons nigella seeds**

*Ground black pepper
may be substituted

Place lentils in a saucepan, cover with water, and bring to a boil. Cook, uncovered, for 9 minutes. Drain and place aside. In a large stockpot, fry 6 of the chopped onions, garlic, turmeric, and cumin in olive oil until golden. Transfer lentils, broth, and water to the pot. Add salt, nigella seed or pepper to taste. Bring soup to a boil. Lower heat, cover, and simmer for 40 minutes. Fry the remaining onion in olive oil until crisp but not blackened. Add as a garnish over individual bowls of soup.

Pomegranate Soup

2 large onions, chopped
2 tablespoons olive oil
½ cup yellow split peas, rinsed twice
¼ cup rice, rinsed twice
6 cups water
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon ground black pepper
1 teaspoon turmeric
2 cups fresh parsley, chopped
2 cups fresh cilantro (coriander), chopped
¼ cup fresh mint, chopped
1 cup fresh scallions, chopped
1 pound (500g) ground lamb
2 cups pomegranate juice
1 tablespoon sugar
2 tablespoons lemon juice
*2 tablespoons angelica powder**

*Optional

In a large stockpot, sauté the onions in olive oil until golden. Add split peas, rice, water, salt, pepper, and turmeric, bringing to a boil. Lower heat and simmer, covered, for 30 minutes. Add parsley, cilantro, mint, and scallions. Simmer for 15 minutes. Meanwhile, roll ground lamb into medium-size meatballs. Add meatballs and remaining ingredients to the pot. Simmer, covered, for 45 minutes.

Dugh Yogurt Drink

2 cups plain yogurt

3 cups mineral or spring water

3 tablespoons fresh mint, chopped

1 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper

Mint leaves for garnish

Mix ingredients in a large pitcher or jug. Add ice slowly as you stir. Garnish with mint leaves.

Lavash Bread

1 tablespoon quick-rising yeast
½ cup warm water
¼ cup olive oil
1 cup milk
2 tablespoons sugar
2 teaspoons salt
4 cups all-purpose (plain) flour
½ cup poppy and sesame seeds

Preheat oven to 500°F (260°C). Mix yeast and water. Set aside for 15 minutes. Combine yeasty water, oil, milk, sugar, and salt in a large bowl. Slowly mix in flour. Knead into a dough. Divide into 3 even balls. Cover with a clean towel and leave to rise for 30 minutes. Roll out one ball of dough on a clean surface with a floured pin until it is paper-thin. Sprinkle with poppy and sesame seeds. Place on a buttered cookie sheet and bake in oven at 500°F (260°C) for 5 minutes. Repeat with remaining balls of dough.

Fesenjoon

1 pound (500g) shelled walnuts, chopped

Olive oil

2 ½ pounds (1.25kg) skinless chicken breast, cubed

3 large onions, sliced

*6 tablespoons pomegranate paste,
dissolved in 2 cups hot water*

½ teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon ground black pepper

1 tablespoon sugar

2 tablespoons lemon juice

Grind walnuts in a food processor for 1 minute. Fry in olive oil for 10 minutes, stirring constantly. Set aside. Sauté chicken and onions in a deep pan until golden. Add walnuts, pomegranate juice, and remaining ingredients. Bring to a boil. Lower heat to a simmer, cover, and cook for 45 minutes, or until the pomegranate sauce thickens. Serve with *chelow*.

Migraine Headache Remedy

1 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1 teaspoon ground cardamom
1 teaspoon ground cloves
1 cup warm water

In a clean jar or glass, mix spices thoroughly. A soft brown powder should form. Take 1 tablespoon of medicine, making sure to swallow quickly. Wash down with warm water. Repeat, if necessary, every 4 hours.

After Dinner Lavender-Mint Tea

2 tablespoons honey
3 teaspoons fresh lavender flowers
1 cup fresh mint leaves, chopped
1/2 lemon, cut into thin wedges

Boil 2 quarts of water. Heat teapot with half of the water. Discard. Fill teapot with honey, lavender flowers, and mint. Add the hot water. Cover and steep for 10 minutes. Serve with a slice of lemon.

Dolmeh

30–40 canned grape leaves

2 onions, chopped

½ pound (250g) ground meat, lamb or beef

Olive oil

⅓ cup fresh summer savory

½ cup fresh dill

⅓ cup fresh tarragon

¼ cup fresh mint

2 cups cooked basmati rice

½ cup fresh lime juice

1 teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon ground black pepper

Rinse grape leaves and lay aside. Fry onions and meat in olive oil over medium flame until meat is brown. Add chopped herbs to pan and fry for 3 minutes. Remove from heat. In a large bowl, combine the meat, onion, and herb mixture with rice, lime juice, salt, and pepper. Lay one grape leaf, vein side up, on a clean surface. Place one tablespoon of rice and meat mixture in middle of leaf, then roll from the base up, tucking the sides to form a tight pocket. Repeat until all leaves are stuffed. Line a greased deep baking dish with stuffed leaves, pour in $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of water, cover with foil, and bake in oven at 220°F (120°C) for 45 minutes.

Torshi

- 2 large eggplants, cubed*
- 1 pound (500g) small cucumbers, cubed*
- 1 pound (500g) carrots, cubed*
- 2 large white potatoes, cubed*
- 8 garlic cloves, peeled*
- 3 cups cauliflower florets*
- 1 pound (500g) pearl onions, peeled*
- ½ pound (250g) green beans*
- 4 quarts (3.75 litres) white wine vinegar*
- 4 cups chopped fresh herbs (parsley, basil, tarragon, mint, cilantro)*
- 2 tablespoons salt*
- 2 teaspoons ground black pepper*
- ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper*
- 1 tablespoon nigella seeds*
- Torshi all-spice mix (½ teaspoon ground turmeric, 1 tablespoon ground cumin, 1 teaspoon ground saffron, 1 tablespoon ground cardamom, 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon)*

Wash vegetables and dry well with paper towels. Combine all ingredients in a large bowl. Ladle out the mix into sterilized canning jars. Leave lidded jars in a dry, cool place for a minimum of 1 month.

Elephant Ears

1 egg
½ cup milk
¼ cup sugar
¼ cup rosewater
½ teaspoon ground cardamom
3 ¾ cups all-purpose (plain) flour
6 cups vegetable oil

GARNISH:

1 cup confectioners' (icing) sugar
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon

Beat egg in a bowl. Add milk, sugar, rosewater, and cardamom. Slowly mix in flour, kneading into a dough. Roll out on a clean surface with a floured pin until it is paper-thin. Using the rim of a wide-mouthed glass or cup, trace and cut out a circle. Pinch the center of the circle with your thumb and forefinger to form a bow. Set aside. Repeat until all circles (approximately 15) are done. Heat oil in a deep pan. Fry each ear for 1 minute. Lay pastries on paper towels to cool. Sprinkle with sugar and cinnamon mixture.