**Veg Dum Biryani**

Prep time: 45 Min Cook time: 1 hour

**Ingredients:**

* 2 cups hand pounded rice, rinsed and soaked for 30 minutes
* 1.5 cups cauliflower florets
* 2 potatoes, chopped
* ½ cup chopped carrots
* ¼ cup chopped French beans
* 8 to 10 white mushrooms, chopped
* ⅓ cup chopped bell pepper
* ½ cup green peas
* 1 cup thinly sliced onions
* ½ tablespoon finely chopped ginger
* 1 tablespoon finely chopped garlic
* 2 green chilies, sliced
* 6 green cardamoms
* 2 black cardamoms
* 3 cloves
* 1-inch cinnamon stick
* 2 tej patta (Indian bay leaves)
* 2 strands of mace
* 5 cups water
* 2 tablespoons ghee
* 1 teaspoon shahi jeera (cumin seeds)
* 1 cup curd (yogurt), whisked
* ½ teaspoon turmeric powder (haldi)
* 1 teaspoon red chili powder
* 1 teaspoon low sodium salt, or to taste
* ⅓ cup chopped coriander leaves (cilantro)

**Instructions:**

**Boil the Rice:**

1. In a deep-bottomed pan, heat 5 cups of water on high flame.
2. Once the water is hot, add salt, 1 tej patta, 3 green cardamoms, 1 clove, 1 black cardamom, ½ cinnamon stick, and mace.
3. Bring the water to a boil and add the soaked basmati rice.
4. Gently stir with a spoon or fork. When the rice is ¾ cooked, remove from heat, drain, and gently fluff the rice. Set aside.

**Prepare the Vegetable Mixture:**

1. In a 2-liter pressure cooker, heat ghee. Add shahi jeera, 1 tej patta, 3 green cardamoms, 2 cloves, 1 black cardamom, and ½ cinnamon stick.
2. Sauté the whole spices until they crackle.
3. Add the sliced onions and a pinch of salt. Sauté on low to medium heat until the onions turn golden brown or caramelized.
4. Stir in the chopped ginger, garlic, and green chilies. Sauté briefly.
5. Add turmeric powder and red chili powder, and mix well.
6. Add the chopped vegetables and sauté for a minute or two.
7. Lower the heat and add the whisked curd. Stir well, then add ½ cup water. Season with salt and mix again.

**Pressure Cook:**

1. Pressure cook the vegetable mixture for 1 whistle on medium heat.
2. Once the pressure settles naturally, remove the lid and check the gravy.
3. If the vegetables are undercooked, simmer the biryani gravy without the lid until the vegetables are tender. If there’s too much water, simmer until some evaporates and the consistency is thick.

**Layer the Biryani:**

1. In a thick-bottomed pan, layer half of the vegetable gravy first.
2. Layer half of the semi-cooked rice on top.
3. Sprinkle half of the chopped coriander leaves.
4. Add the remaining vegetable gravy as the next layer.
5. Finally, add the remaining rice and sprinkle the remaining coriander leaves.

**Dum Cooking:**

1. Seal the pot tightly with aluminum foil and cover with a lid.
2. Preheat a tava (griddle/skillet) on medium flame. Once hot, lower the flame and place the sealed biryani pan on the tava.
3. Cook on the lowest flame for 30 to 35 minutes.
4. After 15 minutes, turn off the heat. Allow the biryani to rest before opening.
5. Serve hot with raita.