**Veg Pulao**

Prep time: 30 min Cook time: 25 min

**Ingredients:**

* 1 cup hand pounded rice, rinsed and soaked for 30 minutes
* 2 cups mixed vegetables, rinsed and roughly chopped (cauliflower, potatoes, carrots, green peas, French beans, capsicum, baby corn)
* 2 tablespoons oil
* 1 onion, sliced
* 1 tomato, chopped
* 1 teaspoon ginger paste
* 4 garlic cloves, crushed
* 1 green chili, slit
* 2 tablespoons coriander leaves, chopped
* 2 cups water or vegetable stock
* Low sodium salt, to taste
* 1 teaspoon cumin seeds (jeera)
* 1 bay leaf (tej patta)
* 2 green cardamoms
* 1 small piece of mace (optional)
* 1 small piece of cinnamon stick

**Instructions:**

**Prepare the Aromatics:**

1. In a deep, thick-bottomed pot, heat the oil. Add the cumin seeds, bay leaf, green cardamoms, mace, and cinnamon stick.
2. Fry the spices for a few seconds until fragrant.

**Sauté the Masala:**

1. Add the sliced onions and sauté until they turn golden brown.
2. Add the ginger paste, crushed garlic, and slit green chili.
3. Sauté for a few seconds until aromatic, then add the chopped tomatoes. Cook for 2 to 3 minutes until the tomatoes soften.

**Add Vegetables & Rice:**

1. Stir in the mixed vegetables and sauté for an additional 2 minutes.
2. Add the soaked and drained rice to the pot. Sauté for another 2 minutes, gently mixing to coat the rice with the spices.
3. Pour in the water or vegetable stock. Season with salt and stir gently.

**Cook & Serve:**

1. Cover the pot and cook on low heat until the water is absorbed and the rice is cooked (about 15-20 minutes).
2. Once the rice grains are cooked, fluff them gently with a fork. Let the rice stand for 5 minutes before serving.
3. Garnish with chopped coriander leaves and serve hot with curd or raita.