

MEJADRA (MIDDLE EASTERN SPICED RICE)

INGREDIENTS

2 tbsp olive oil
2 tsp cumin seeds (or 1 tsp ground cumin)
1 1/2 tbsp coriander seeds (or 1 1/2 tsp ground coriander)
1 cup basmati rice (or long grain)
1 1/4 cup / 315 ml water (see notes)
400g / 14 oz canned brown lentils, drained (1 can), drained
1/2 tsp ground turmeric
1 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
1 tsp sugar
1 tsp salt
Black pepper

CRISPY FRIED ONIONS

3 large or 4 small onions, very finely sliced
1 cup / 250 ml vegetable or sunflower oil
Salt

METHOD

Step 1:

Prepare the Onions: Heat oil in a medium saucepan over medium high heat. Add about 1/3 of the onions and cook for 5 minutes until golden and crispy. Drain on paper towels. Repeat with remaining onions, in two batches.

Step 2:

RICE

Put the olive oil, cumin seeds and coriander in a saucepan over medium heat.

Cook for a couple of minutes until the spices are fragrant.

Step 3:

Add the rice and stir to coat with the oil and spices.

Step 4:

Add the water and lentils.

While it comes to boil, add all the other spices, salt and pepper.

Step 5:

When it comes to a boil, turn it down to medium-low, cover with lid and let cook for 10 to 12 minutes, or until all the liquid has mostly been absorbed.

Step 6:

Remove from heat and let it rest for 10 minutes - during this time, any residual liquid will absorb.

Step 7:

Fluff rice with a fork and adjust the seasoning with more salt if you wish.

Step 8:

Just prior to serving, stir through most of the onions and top with remainder. Sprinkle with chopped coriander if desired. Best served warm.

THE COOKERY

by The Secret Jozi Chef