

Iranian New Year Dishes

1 CAKE YAZDI/DESSERT

2 large eggs
1/2 sugar
2 tablespoons honey or syrup
1/2 cup oil
1/2 cup yogurt
1.5 cup flour
2 teaspoons baking soda or powder
1 pinch salt
2 tablespoons rose water
1 teaspoon cardamom
Sesame seed for garnishing

Mix the eggs and sugar for 5 mins then on low speed add the honey, oil, and yogurt. Then mix dry ingredient then add it into wet ingredients. Then pour into cups and garnish with sesame seeds and put into oven preheated oven with 400 F for 10 mins then reduce to 350 F for another 15 or 20 mins or until the top is golden brown.

2 GHORMEH SABZI STEW

1 large yellow onion, finely chopped
Canola oil
1 tsp. turmeric
Boneless 1.5 lbs of lamb meat
1 bunch green onions, green parts only, finely chopped
1 b spinach, finely chopped
1 b Italian flat-leaf parsley, finely chopped
1 b cilantro leaves, finely chopped
1 b chives or scallion tops, finely chopped
1 b fenugreek leaves, finely chopped
Juice from one lemon
4-5 dried Persian limes (give them one good crush to crack them)
1 can red kidney beans or dried

Saute the onion over medium-high heat in a couple of tablespoons of canola oil until it is a deep golden brown. Add the turmeric, frying for another minute or two, then add the stew meat. Toss well to coat in turmeric, and cook until the meat is browned well on all sides.

Meanwhile, fry the herbs in a healthy splash of canola oil until they are fragrant and deepening in color. Watch them carefully as they will go bitter if burned. You want them to be a deep, dark green without blackening.

Add the fried greens to the meat & onion mixture, stirring well. Add 1.5 - 2 cups of water (you want a "slurry", but not "soupy" mixture). Season with salt & pepper to taste (easy on the pepper). Add the lemon juice and Persian limes, turn the heat down, and let the whole thing simmer, covered, for 1.5-2 hours, or until the greens are mostly softened. (Note: if you are using dried beans, you will want to add them at this point)

Finally, add the drained kidney beans, and cook another 30 minutes. Check your seasoning level, adding more lemon juice if needed (before you do, though, press down on the dried limes to get them to release the liquid they've absorbed)

Serve with rice

3 PERSIAN RICE

1 cup basmati rice for 2 people!
3 tablespoons canola oil (you can use any veg oil)
1 tablespoon plain yogurt
1/2 teaspoon saffron threads
2 tablespoons hot water
1 tortilla

Wash the rice in two changes of water, then let it soak in well-salted water for a couple of hours.

Bring 3-4 cups water to a boil in a large pot, and season with a teaspoon salt.

Add the washed rice, and let it cook until the grains are softened and you can see the ridges (maybe 15 minutes) - you can bite into the rice, and it should feel "al dente". DO NOT OVERCOOK.

Drain the rice, and give it a gentle rinse with warm water.

Brew saffron threads in 2 tablespoons of hot water.

Put a few tablespoons of oil in the bottom of the saucepan and add the tortilla (you can trim it to fit the size of the pan). Mix the yoghurt and brewed saffron with some of the rice. Put it into the pan make an even layer of it. Add the rest of the rice and don't mix the layers. You should sort of "mound" it towards the center of the pot.

Drizzle another tablespoon of oil (or butter, if you prefer) over top of the rice. With the handle of a wooden spoon, poke a few holes in the rice.

Keep the heat high for 10 mins then reduce to low and cook on low heat for about 20 mins.