

*****Please note that there are several pages of recipes here. You must scroll down to see all of the recipes.**

Zereshk Polo (Persian Rice)

Ingredients

4 cups basmati rice
8 cups of water
3 Tbsp vegetable oil, divided
2 tsp salt
10 Tbsp of butter, divided into 1 Tbsp each
1 cup of dried Zereshk (barberries)
1 large tortilla
A large pinch of saffron

- Place 4 cups of Basmati rice into a large bowl and fill the bowl with cool water. Wash the rice by using your hands to move it around in the bowl of water and then carefully drain off as much water as you can without spilling the rice into the sink. I use one hand to tilt the bowl and the other to cover the edge of the bowl and let the water drain between my fingers while holding the rice in. Repeat this process 3 times.
- Transfer rinsed rice to a large non-stick cooking pot that has a tight-fitting lid. Add 8 cups of water, 1 Tbsp vegetable oil, and 2 tsp of salt to the rice.
- Turn heat to medium-high until rice comes to a boil, then lower to low-medium to ensure that the rice continues to boil, but slowly. Cook for about 8 minutes or until the rice begins to look “fuzzy.”
- Drain rice into a colander with small holes so that you don’t lose the rice. Immediately run cold water over the rice to stop the cooking process. Drain all of the water.
- Add about 2 Tbsp of extra-virgin olive oil to your non-stick pot and turn the heat to medium-high. Once the oil is hot, put the tortilla directly into the bottom of the pan and watch carefully until it browns slightly. Flip the tortilla over so that the browned side is facing up. Carefully transfer the parboiled rice to the pot, making sure to break up any clumps that have formed.

- Using the handle of a wooden spoon, poke several holes in the rice, reaching all the way to the tortilla. This will allow the steam to rise from the bottom of the pot. Pour Arrange the 6 Tbsp of butter around the top of the rice in 1 tablespoon sections.
- Using a clean kitchen towel or several paper towels, wrap the lid of the pan so that the towel is between the lid and the pan. Fit the lid tightly onto the pan, pulling the excess towel to the top so that it does not get near the burner/flame. This process pulls moisture from the rice so that the grains remain separate and do not get sticky.
- Reduce temperature to low/medium and allow the rice to steam for about 30 minutes.
- Using a mortar and pestle, crush a large pinch of saffron with a pinch of granulated sugar. Melt 2 Tbsp of butter in the microwave in a small dish. Add crushed saffron to the hot butter and stir to dissolve. Set aside.
- In a small pan, add remaining 2 Tbsp of butter and 1 cup of dried zereshk. Over low heat, stir the zereshk in the butter for 3 or 4 minutes to rehydrate them. Don't overcook them or they will become hard.
- When rice is ready, remove lid and turn off heat.
- Remove about two cups of the rice and put in a medium sized bowl. Slowly pour melted saffron over this bowl of rice and stir to mix it all together. This should give this bowl of rice a beautiful yellow color and wonderful aroma.
- Now, using a spatula, gently transfer the rest of the rice from the pan to a large serving platter. DO NOT break up the crust of rice that is in the bottom of the pan, but carefully scrape as much of the loose rice away from it as you can.
- Sprinkle the saffron-blended rice over the top of your herbed rice.
- Next, spoon the zereshk over the top of the rice platter.
- Using the sharp end of your spatula, break up the tortilla crust into bite-sized or slightly larger pieces. You may need to pull the entire crust out onto another platter and use your hands to help break up the *tadigh* or crust. Arrange the pieces around the sides of your rice platter to make a nice presentation.

Jujeh Kabob (Chicken Kabob)

Note: Your Jujeh Kabobs will taste best if you marinate the chicken in the yogurt mixture overnight in the refrigerator.

Ingredients

6 boneless/skinless chicken breasts
2 cups plain yogurt (Greek yogurt will work too, as long as it is plain)
3 large white or yellow onion
2 bell peppers, any color
2 cups of cherry tomatoes or several small plum tomatoes
3 cloves of garlic
2 lemons
1 tsp salt
½ tsp pepper
1 tsp turmeric
½ tsp paprika
1 pinch of ground saffron (optional)
Kabob sticks

- Place a gallon-size Ziplock bag in a large bowl to hold it open.
- Pour 2 cups of plain yogurt into the bag.
- Add salt, pepper, turmeric, paprika, and saffron (optional)
- Using a box grater, grate 1 large onion saving all of the juice and any large pieces that you could not grate. Dump all of this into the bag with the yogurt and spices.
- Clean and crush the garlic cloves and add them to the bag.
- Seal the bag and mash everything together using your hands.
- Clean chicken breasts and cut them into 1 ½" cubes. Carefully open the Ziplock bag and drop the pieces of chicken into the yogurt marinade. If you have time to do this in the day before you plan to cook the kabobs, the flavor will be much better. Store marinating chicken in the refrigerator.

- *If you have marinated your chicken in advance, remove it from the refrigerator when you begin to prepare your vegetables.*
- Clean bell peppers and cut into 1 ½ - 2" squares; set aside.
- Wash tomatoes and set aside.
- Peel remaining 2 onions and cut into quarters or sixths.

- If using bamboo skewers, soak them in a flat dish of water for about 10 minutes before you assemble your kabobs. If using metal skewers, no preparation is needed.
- Begin by skewering a chunk of onion and pushing it to almost the top of the skewer. Leave about 2" of skewer open at the end. Next, add a piece of bell pepper, then a tomato, then a piece of the chicken. Alternate vegetables and chicken until all skewers have been filled, remembering to leave about 2-3" of skewer free on the opposite end for a handle. As you finish each skewer, lay it on a cookie sheet because the marinade will continue to drip off of the chicken.
- Heat your grill to medium/high. Brush grates with a small amount of oil.
- Place Jujeh Kabobs directly onto the grill. Turn occasionally until all sides are nicely browned and chicken appears to be cooked through. Remove skewers to serving platter.
- Serve with rice and salads.

Kabob Khoobideh (Ground Beef Kabobs)

Ingredients

2 pounds fresh (never frozen) ground beef (no more than 80% lean)

2 large white or yellow onion

1 cup fine dry breadcrumbs

1 large egg

1 tsp salt

1 tsp pepper

1 tsp garlic powder

1 Tbsp paprika

1 Tbsp turmeric powder

Flat Kabob sticks (optional)

- In a large mixing bowl, mix ground beef, salt, pepper, garlic powder, paprika, and turmeric.
- Using a box grater, grate the 2 onions into a bowl. Take a hand full of the grated onion and squeeze out as much of the onion juice as you can and drop the onion into the meat mixture. Repeat this process until all of the onion has been squeezed and then added to the meat mixture.
- Add egg and breadcrumbs to the meat mixture.
- Using both hands mash and mix the meat, onion, egg, breadcrumbs and seasonings for several minutes until it becomes almost like a paste. The key to a good Kabob Khoobideh is mixing it all together well really well.
- Fill a small bowl with water. You will use this to keep your fingers damp so that the meat does not stick to them.
- If using the flat metal Kabob sticks, divide the meat into 8 equal portions. If you are going to make patties, a handful of the meat mixture is about one patty.
- With wet hands mold the patties and place them directly onto the grill or with wet hands, take 1/8 of the meat and place it in the palm of your dampened hand. Place the flat skewer on top of the meat and begin to squeeze the meat around the skewer, until it completely surrounds it. Now using your hand, distribute the meat along the skewer so that it forms one long Kabob. Make sure that the meat is sticking to the skewer and will not fall off when cooked. Rewet your hands as needed and make sure that the meat is about ½" thick all around the skewer. Be sure to leave a couple of

inches of the skewer free on the top and bottom so that you can rest them on the grill. Gently place the finished skewers of Kabob on a baking sheet as you prepare the remaining skewers and meat.

Grilling the Kabob Khoobideh

- Heat your grill at high temperature.
- Depending on the structure of your grill, you will likely need several bricks or other objects that will not burn if put directly on the hot grill. You will need to build rests for the skewers along the back and front of the grill, so that the skewers can fit between them, resting just the tip on the back rest and the handle on the front rest. This is because you do not want the Kabob to actually touch the grill grates but be raised above them.
- If you have made veggie kabobs as well, grill them first, and then the Kabob Khoobideh.
- Place as many of the Khoobideh skewers on the grill rests as possible, without them touching. Allow the meat to cook for about 4 minutes, then turn all of the skewers over to cook the other side. Repeat this process a few times until the meat is nicely browned as appears to be done.
- Using a pita bread or tortilla, gently loosen the top and bottom of the meat from the skewer and then carefully push it from the handle end, sliding it off the skewer and onto an oven-safe serving platter. Once you have removed all of that batch to the platter, cover the meat with more pita bread or tortillas and place them in a slightly warm oven to keep as you make more of the kabobs. Make sure that the skewers have cooled and been washed before you begin the next batch.
- Repeat until all of the meat has been cooked. Minimum internal temperature of the kabob should reach no less than 160 degrees.

Serve with grilled vegetables, rice, and salads. You may also serve with powdered somagh (sumac) as a seasoning to be sprinkled on top of the cooked kabobs. This also goes well with dill pickles or gherkins.

Mast-o-Khiar (Cucumber & Herb Yogurt)

This savory yogurt dish is light and creamy and the perfect accompaniment to your kabobs and rice.

Ingredients

1 (32 oz) container of plain, full-fat yogurt (you can use low-fat, but it won't be as creamy and authentic)

1 English cucumber or 8 Persian cucumbers

1/8 cup of dried mint

salt & pepper to taste

- Open yogurt container and gently stir to mix in any liquid that has pooled at the top of the container. Pour entire contents of container into a medium mixing bowl.
- Peel cucumber(s) and dice into small cubes. Place diced cucumber in a colander and drain for several minutes.
- Add cucumber to yogurt in bowl.
- Add about 1 teaspoon of salt and ½ teaspoon of pepper to this mixture. Stir well.
- Add in 1/8 cup of dried mint and mix well.
- Cover and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes to allow the salt to become incorporated and the mint to rehydrate.
- Taste and adjust salt if needed.
- Serve in small bowls with meal.

*Optional – chop up some pistachio nuts and lightly sprinkle on top of yogurt when serving.

Salad Shirazi

This salad, which originated in the city of Shiraz, is a light and flavorful accompaniment to any Persian meal.

Ingredients

1 English cucumber

2 large tomatoes

1 medium yellow onion

2 large lemons (to squeeze about 3/4 cup of fresh lemon juice)

¼ cup of dried mint

salt & pepper to taste

- Peel cucumber and dice into small pieces.
- Core tomatoes and cut into small pieces.
- Peel onion and dice into small pieces.
- Put all vegetables into a medium mixing bowl.
- Add dried mint and salt & pepper to taste.
- Reem lemons allowing juice to fall into veggie filled mixing bowl.
- Mix everything well, cover, and place in refrigerator for about 30 minutes.
- To serve, remove from refrigerator, stir again and taste. Adjust salt to your taste.
- Serve in small bowls with any Persian meal.

Doogh (Yogurt Beverage)

Ingredients

1 large container of full-fat plain yogurt

Water or plain seltzer water

Salt

Dried Mint

- In a large pitcher, combine 2 cups of plain yogurt with 2 cups of water, ½ tsp salt, and a few pinches of dried mint. Mix well with a whisk and taste. If it is not savory and slightly salty. Allow the drink to rest for at least 10 minutes for the salt to dissolve and the mint to rehydrate. Taste for saltiness and add more if needed. Pour over a glass filled with ice and serve.

Doogh should be about the consistency of full-fat milk.