



Vegetable Biryani

Serves 3-4

Ingredients

1 cup basmati rice 200 grams, soaked in 3 cups (24 oz) water for 30 minutes
6 whole green cardamom divided
4 cloves divided
1 teaspoon salt divided
1.5 tablespoon +1 teaspoon ghee divided
2 medium red onions thinly sliced, divided
2 tablespoons broken cashews
1 small potato cubed
1/2 cup cauliflower florets medium sized florets
1 medium carrot cut diagonally
5-6 green beans cut diagonally
2-3 green chilies slit (optional)
2 tablespoons milk 30 ml
saffron strands generous pinch
1-inch ginger crushed
4-5 large garlic cloves crushed
2 green chilies crushed
1 ½ tablespoons oil 22 ml
½ teaspoon cumin seeds
1-inch cinnamon stick
1 bay leaf
3 whole black peppercorns
⅓ cup plain yogurt whisked
1 ½ teaspoon biryani masala or use 1 teaspoon garam masala
½ teaspoon chili powder or to taste
¼ cup water
2 tablespoons chopped cilantro
2 tablespoons chopped mint

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Directions

Rice:

1. Soak the rice in 3 cups (24 oz) water for 30 minutes. After the rice has soaked, drain the water using a colander.
2. Heat a pot full of water, add 3 green cardamom, 2 cloves and 3/4 teaspoon salt to it. Let it come to a boil. Add rice, stir with a spoon.
3. Let it cook uncovered (don't lower the heat) until it's almost cooked (around 70-75% cooked but not fully cooked). There should be a bite to it. This takes around 6 to 7 minutes.
4. Remove pan from heat and drain rice in a colander. You may add a teaspoon of ghee to the rice. Set aside.

Caramelize onion & cashews and pan fry the veggies:

1. Heat 1 ½ tablespoons ghee in a pan on medium heat. Once hot, add 1 sliced onion to it and cook until they turn golden brown and for around 8 to 9 minutes. Remove on a plate.
2. To the same pan, now add cashews and cook until golden brown, around 1 to 2 minutes. Remove and set aside.
3. To same pan add potato, cook for 2 minutes until light brown, add cauliflower, beans and carrots. Sauté for 2 to 3 minutes until veggies appear light brown. Remove on a plate.
4. Heat 2 tablespoons milk in a pan. Once warm, add saffron strands (crush it before adding). Let it sit for 10 minutes. Saffron milk is ready, set it aside.
5. Crush ginger, garlic and chili using a mortar and pestle or mince them fine. Set aside
6. Heat 1 ½ tablespoons oil in a pan/pot on medium heat. Add cumin seeds, cinnamon stick, bay leaf, peppercorns, remaining 3 cardamom and remaining 2 cloves. Stir and let the spices sizzle for few seconds. Add the sliced onions also add ¼ teaspoon salt. Cook for 3 to 4 minutes until onions turn light brown. Then add the crushed ginger-garlic and green chilies paste. Cook for 2 minutes.

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7. Remove pan from heat and whisk in the yogurt, whisking continuously until it's all absorbed. Put the pan back on heat. Add all the veggies and toss to combine
8. Add the biryani masala/garam masala and kashmiri red chili powder.
9. Add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup water. Let it cook for around 6 to 7 minutes until veggies are almost cooked but not overcooked. They should be firm to bite. Cover the pan, I usually cook uncovered. There shouldn't be much water left, it should be kind of thick mixture. Remove from heat.

Bake the biryani

1. Preheat oven to 350F.
2. Now take a heavy bottom pan. Grease the bottom of the pan with ghee or olive oil or butter. Then add a layer of rice (half of the rice). Top with half of fried onion, half of fried cashews and half of cilantro and mint. Now place the veggies on top (all of it).
3. Then add another rice layer (remaining rice) on top of the veggies. Then top it with remaining with fried onion, cashews, cilantro and mint. Add the prepared saffron milk on top.
4. Cover the pan tightly with aluminum foil. Then cover with a fitted lid.
5. Bake for about 15-20 minutes until rice is fully cooked.