

Tahdig

Ingredients

2 c Basmati Rice
2 t Saffron Threads
2 T Boiling Water
1 T Kosher Salt
3 T Vegetable Oil
2 T Butter

Instructions

1. In a medium bowl, submerge basmati rice in cold water. Using your fingers, agitate the rice. The water will be cloudy; discard it, leaving the wet grains behind. Repeat this process until the water appears to run clear.
2. Fill the bowl with water again, coming 2 inches above the grains, and leave the rice to soak for at least 30 minutes or up to 4 hours.
3. Grind the saffron into a fine powder using a mortar and pestle. Combine the saffron powder and boiling water in a small bowl and set aside.
4. In a large pot, add about 1 tablespoon salt and fill about 2/3 with water, as if you were cooking pasta. There should be enough water in the pot for the rice to cook freely and the water should taste lightly salty. Bring to a rolling boil.

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5. Meanwhile, drain the soaked rice and discard the soaking water. Add the drained rice to the pot.

Boil for 5 to 7 minutes, or until the rice is al dente (cooked on the outside and slightly crunchy in the middle).

6. Drain the rice well in a mesh colander and run cool water over it so it stops cooking. In an 8 or 9-inch nonstick pot with a lid, add the oil and the saffron water and a few serving spoons of rice at a time to coat with the oil and saffron water.

Keep combining rice with the oil and saffron water, and, using a spatula, form an even layer of saffron-infused rice in the bottom and partially up the sides of the pot approximately 3/4-inch thickness. Depending on the size of your pan, this will be 3/4 cup to 1 1/2 cups of rice. This is

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what will magically transform into the golden, crispy crust.

7. Add the rest of the parboiled rice on top of the saffron-infused rice in an even layer without stirring it. Using the handle of a wooden spoon, create 4 to 6 indentions in the rice, making sure you do not disturb the bottom layer. Dot the holes with butter.

8. Stretch a clean, dry tea towel over the top and add the lid. This will help prevent steam from escaping. Tie the corners of the tea cloth together on top of the pot's lid. Turn the burner to medium-high heat and let the rice sizzle for 5 minutes (make sure it doesn't burn; do not turn the heat to high). After 5 minutes, decrease the heat to the lowest setting and allow the rice

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to cook until it is cooked through, about 20 more minutes. This will vary according to the pan you are using and the intensity of heat of your burner.

9. When ready, remove the pot from the burner and allow it to rest for 10 minutes with the lid on.

Remove the lid and place a large platter over the top of the pot. Very carefully flip the rice onto the plate. Serve.