

Lamb Briyani Recipe

(Indian Briyani Recipe)

Ingredients: Serves 6-8, Oven: Preheat to 180°C

1 lb (500 g) lamb tenderloin
3 tablespoons clarified butter
2 yellow onions, thinly sliced, plus ½ cup (2 oz/60 g) chopped yellow onion
5 cloves garlic, peeled and chopped
2 tablespoons peeled and chopped fresh ginger
1 green jalapeno chili, seeded and chopped
Spice mixture*
½ cup (4 oz/125g) plain yogurt
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
2 teaspoons salt
1½ cups (10½ oz/330 g) basmati rice
¼ cup (⅓ oz/10 g) chopped fresh cilantro (fresh coriander)
¼ cup (1½ oz/45 g) unsalted raw cashews, toasted and chopped
¼ cup (1½ oz/45 g) golden raisins (sultanas)
2 hard-boiled eggs, peeled and cut into wedges

Method:

Cut the lamb into ½-inch (12-mm) cubes. In a Dutch oven over high heat, heat 1 tablespoon of the clarified butter. Working in batches, sear the lamb cubes in a single layer until deep brown on all sides, 7-10 minutes per batch. Transfer to a plate. Return the Dutch oven to medium heat and heat 1 tablespoon of the clarified butter. Add the 2 sliced onions and sauté until crisp and brown, 15-20 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the onions to paper towels to drain. While the onions are cooking, in a blender, combine the ½ cup chopped onion, garlic, ginger and chili and process until a thick paste forms. Add 1-2 tablespoons water if needed to facilitate blending. Return the Dutch oven to medium-high heat and heat the remaining 1 tablespoon clarified butter. Add the onion-garlic paste and sauté until golden brown, 5-7 minutes. Add the spice mixture and sauté until fragrant, about 2 minutes. Add the browned onions, the yogurt, the lemon juice, 1½ teaspoons of the salt, and ¼ cup (2 fl oz/60 ml) water. Reduce the heat to low and simmer for 2 minutes to blend the flavors. Stir in the seared lamb, mix well, cover, and simmer for 10 minutes to heat through. Raise the heat to medium, stir the rice into the lamb, and sauté briefly. Add 2 cups (16 fl oz/500 ml) water and the remaining ½ teaspoon salt and bring to a simmer. Stir well, cover, and place in the preheated oven. Bake until the rice is cooked through and most of the moisture has evaporated, about 30 minutes; stir once during this time. Let rest, covered, for 10 minutes. Uncover, fluff the rice and lamb with a fork, and transfer to a platter. Garnish with the cilantro, cashews, raisins, and eggs. Serve at once.

*Spice Mixture:

Briyani, elaborate dishes of rice and meat or vegetables, were introduced to northern India by the Moghuls in the sixteenth century. The spice mixtures, or masalas, used in briyani impart a rich color and flavor to the dishes. To make the mixture called for here, toast and grind 1 teaspoon each cumin and coriander (cilantro) seeds. Transfer the ground seeds to a bowl and stir in 1 teaspoon each ground turmeric and cinnamon, ½ teaspoon ground cardamom, ¼ teaspoon each ground nutmeg and cayenne pepper, 4 whole star anise, and 3 bay leaves.