

Chicken Maklube

Authentic Chicken Maqluba recipe with tender chicken, rice, and fried eggplant. This traditional Middle Eastern upside-down dish serves 6 in 70 minutes.

20 min
PREP

50 min
COOK

1h 10min
TOTAL

6
SERVINGS

Medium
DIFFICULTY

Chicken Maklube

Ingredients

- 2 lb eggplant
- 3.5 lb chicken meat
- 1 onion
- 2 cup rice
- 3.5 oz butter
- 0.5 tbsp granulated sugar
- 1.5 oz pistachio
- 1.5 oz almond
- 0.5 tbsp salt
- 0.5 tbsp black pepper
- 0.5 tbsp cumin

Instructions

- 1 Prepare the eggplant**

Wash 2 pounds of eggplant and slice into 1/4-inch thick rounds. Heat oil in a large frying pan over medium-high heat (350°F/175°C). Fry eggplant slices in batches for 3-4 minutes per side until golden brown and tender. Transfer to paper towels and set aside.
- 2 Cook the chicken**

Place 3.5 pounds of chicken pieces in a large, heavy-bottomed pot. Cook over medium heat for 15-20 minutes, stirring occasionally, until all moisture evaporates and chicken releases its natural juices and begins to brown lightly.
- 3 Prepare the rice and onion**

Rinse 2 cups of rice in cold water until water runs clear, then drain thoroughly. Finely dice 1 onion and set aside.
- 4 Sauté the aromatics**

Add diced onion and 0.5 tablespoons of butter to the chicken in the pot. Cook for 5-7 minutes, stirring frequently, until onion is soft and translucent.
- 5 Season and layer**

Season chicken mixture with 0.5 tablespoons each of salt, pepper, and cumin. Arrange chicken pieces in center of pot, then layer fried eggplant slices around the sides, letting them hang over the edges.

6 Add rice and cook

Spread drained rice evenly over chicken. Fold overhanging eggplant slices over rice to cover like a blanket. Add enough boiling water to cover rice by 1 inch. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer for 25-30 minutes until water is absorbed and rice is tender.

7 Prepare garnish

Heat remaining butter in a small pan over medium heat. Add 1.5 ounces each of almonds and pistachios. Toast for 3-4 minutes, stirring constantly, until golden and fragrant.

8 Serve

Let pot rest for 5 minutes off heat. Run a knife around edges to loosen, then quickly invert onto a large serving platter. Tap bottom of pot and lift carefully. Garnish with toasted nuts and serve immediately.

Tips

Salt the eggplant slices and let them sit for 30 minutes before frying to remove bitterness and reduce oil absorption during cooking.

Use a heavy-bottomed pot to ensure even heat distribution and prevent the bottom layer from burning during the long cooking process.

Don't skip rinsing the rice until the water runs clear—this removes excess starch and prevents the grains from becoming gummy.

Allow the finished dish to rest for 5-10 minutes before inverting to help it hold its shape when turned out onto the serving platter.

Toast the nuts in a dry pan first, then add butter for the last minute to prevent burning while achieving maximum flavor.

Keep the cooking liquid at a gentle simmer rather than a rolling boil to ensure the rice cooks evenly without becoming mushy.

Place a clean kitchen towel under the lid during the final resting period to absorb excess steam and prevent soggy rice.

Run a knife around the edges of the pot before inverting to help release the Maqluba cleanly onto your serving platter.