

Lentil Bulgur Pilaf

Turkish lentil bulgur pilaf with green lentils and caramelized onions. A hearty, protein-packed vegan side dish ready in 40 minutes.

10 min

PREP

20 min

COOK

30 min

TOTAL

6

SERVINGS

Medium

DIFFICULTY

Lentil Bulgur Pilaf

Ingredients

- 2 cup green lentil
- 3 cup cracked wheat
- 1 red onion
- 1 capia pepper
- 2 tbsp olive oil

Instructions

- 1 Prepare the lentils**

Rinse 1/2 cup green lentils under cold running water until the water runs clear. Place in a medium saucepan with 2 cups water and bring to a boil over high heat.
- 2** Reduce heat to medium and cook for 15-18 minutes until lentils are tender but still hold their shape when pressed with a fork. Drain and set aside.
- 3 Start the pilaf**

Heat 2 tablespoons olive oil in a heavy-bottomed medium saucepan over medium heat until shimmering, about 1 minute.
- 4** Add 1 finely diced onion and cook, stirring occasionally, for 5-7 minutes until golden brown and softened.
- 5** Add 1 cup coarse bulgur wheat and stir constantly for 3-4 minutes until the grains are coated with oil and smell nutty and toasted.
- 6 Cook the pilaf**

Add the cooked lentils, 2 cups hot water, 1 teaspoon salt, and 1/2 teaspoon black pepper. Stir once to combine.
- 7** Bring mixture to a boil over high heat, then immediately reduce heat to low, cover tightly, and simmer for 15-18 minutes until all liquid is absorbed and bulgur is tender.
- 8 Rest and serve**

Remove from heat and place a clean kitchen towel between the pot and lid to absorb excess moisture. Let rest undisturbed for 10 minutes.
- 9** Remove towel and lid, then fluff pilaf gently with a fork. Taste and adjust seasoning with additional salt and pepper if needed before serving.

Tips

Pre-cook the green lentils separately until just tender but still firm, as they take longer to cook than bulgur and can become mushy if overcooked.

Toast the bulgur in the oil until it becomes fragrant and lightly golden, about 3-4 minutes. This step adds depth of flavor and helps maintain the grain's texture.

Use coarse or medium bulgur rather than fine bulgur, which can turn mushy and doesn't hold its texture well in pilaf preparations.

Keep the liquid at a gentle simmer rather than a rolling boil to prevent the grains from breaking apart and becoming gummy.

Let the pilaf rest off the heat with a clean kitchen towel under the lid for 10 minutes. This allows the grains to finish cooking in their own steam.

Don't lift the lid during the simmering process, as this releases essential steam needed for proper cooking.

Season the pilaf at the end of cooking to avoid over-salting, as the liquid reduces during the cooking process.

Fluff the finished pilaf with a fork rather than a spoon to avoid breaking the grains and maintain the light, fluffy texture.