

Mujadara

Authentic Middle Eastern Mujadara recipe with lentils, rice, and caramelized onions. This hearty vegetarian dish is perfect for weeknight dinners.

15 min

PREP

1h

COOK

1h 15min

TOTAL

4

SERVINGS

Easy

DIFFICULTY

Mujadara

Ingredients

- 1 cup rice
- 2 onion
- 3 cup water
- 1 cup olive oil
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1 tsp allspice
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp black pepper

Instructions

- 1 Prepare the lentils**

Rinse 1 cup lentils under cold running water until water runs clear. Place in a medium saucepan with 3 cups water and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to medium and simmer uncovered for 15-20 minutes until lentils are tender but still hold their shape when pressed with a fork.
- 2 Drain the lentils in a fine-mesh strainer and set aside.**
- 3 Caramelize the onions**

Heat 1/4 cup olive oil in a large heavy-bottomed skillet or Dutch oven over medium heat. Add the 2 sliced onions and cook, stirring occasionally, for 25-30 minutes until deep golden brown and caramelized.
- 4 Remove half of the caramelized onions with a slotted spoon and transfer to a paper towel-lined plate. Set aside for garnish.**
- 5 Cook the rice**

Add 1 cup rice to the remaining onions in the pan and stir to coat. Cook for 2-3 minutes until rice grains are lightly toasted and fragrant.
- 6 Add the cooked lentils, 1 teaspoon cumin, 1 teaspoon salt, 1 teaspoon black pepper, and 1 teaspoon turmeric. Stir well to combine all ingredients evenly.**
- 7 Pour in 2½ cups hot water or vegetable broth and bring to a boil over high heat. Once boiling, reduce heat to low, cover with a tight-fitting lid, and simmer for 18-20 minutes until rice is tender and liquid is absorbed.**
- 8 Finish and serve**

Remove from heat and let stand covered for 5 minutes to steam. Fluff gently with a fork and transfer to a serving platter. Top with the

reserved caramelized onions and serve immediately.

Tips

Master the Caramelized Onions: Don't rush this crucial step. Cook onions slowly over medium-low heat for 25-30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Properly caramelized onions should be deep golden brown and sweet – this is what gives mujadara its signature flavor.

Choose the Right Lentils: Brown or green lentils work best as they hold their shape during cooking. Red lentils will break down and create a mushy texture, so avoid them for traditional mujadara.

Toast Your Rice: Briefly sauté the rice with the caramelized onions before adding liquid. This creates a nutty flavor and helps prevent the rice from becoming too soft or sticky.

Use Quality Olive Oil: Since olive oil is one of the few ingredients, using extra virgin olive oil will significantly impact the final flavor. The oil carries the caramelized onion flavors throughout the dish.

Let It Rest: After cooking, let the mujadara rest covered for 5-10 minutes off the heat. This allows the grains to finish absorbing moisture and results in better texture.

Season in Layers: Add salt to the lentils while cooking, season the onions as they caramelize, and taste for final seasoning before serving. This creates more complex, well-developed flavors.

Make Extra Caramelized Onions: Double the onion quantity and reserve half for garnishing. The crispy, golden onions on top provide textural contrast and visual appeal.

Adjust Consistency: If your mujadara seems too dry, add warm broth or water a few tablespoons at a time. If too wet, cook uncovered for a few more minutes to evaporate excess liquid.