



BARIIS (BASMATI RICE PILAF WITH RAISINS)

Bariis is a rice pilaf that Somalis often serve with cooked meat like Somali Beef Stew or stewed chicken. The mix of savory and sweet, more specifically the combination of cooked onions, warm spices, and sweet raisins, is very typical of Somali food. Bariis even makes for a wonderful breakfast with a fried or soft-boiled egg on top. Rinsing and soaking the rice ahead of time really helps the grains let go of their dusty coating and also cook more quickly and evenly.

INGREDIENTS (SERVES 4)

- 1 cup basmati rice
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil or canola oil
- 1 small red onion, thinly sliced into half-moons
- One 2-inch piece cinnamon stick
- 2 whole cloves
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- Pinch of ground cardamom
- 1 small tomato, finely chopped
- Kosher salt
- 3 tablespoons golden raisins or regular raisins
- 1 tablespoon Xawaash Spice Mix
- 1 ½ cups boiling water

DIRECTIONS

1. Place the rice in a fine-mesh sieve and rinse with cold tap water, stirring the rice gently with your hands, until the water runs clear. Place the rinsed rice in a bowl, cover with cold water, and let it soak for at least 10 minutes and up to 30 minutes.
2. Warm the oil in a medium saucepan set over medium heat.
3. Once the oil is hot, add the onion and cook, stirring, until it begins to soften, about 5 minutes. Add the cinnamon and cloves and cook, stirring, until the mixture smells very fragrant, about 5 minutes.
4. Stir in the garlic and cardamom and cook, stirring, until they're also quite fragrant, about 30 seconds.
5. Add the tomato and a large pinch of salt, then increase the heat to high.
6. Cook, stirring, until the juice from the tomato has evaporated and the mixture is like a thick paste, about 2 minutes.
7. Drain the rice and add it to the pot, along with another large pinch of salt.
8. Reduce the heat to low, cover, and cook, stirring, until the mixture is quite dry and the rice smells nutty and is opaque, about 5 minutes.
9. Stir in the raisins, spice mix, and boiling water.
10. Reduce the heat to low, cover, and cook until the rice has absorbed the liquid and is tender, about 15 minutes.
11. Turn off the heat and let the rice sit, covered, for at least 10 minutes before fluffing with a spoon or fork.
12. If you can find the cinnamon stick and cloves, fish them out and discard them (otherwise, just warn your guests to avoid eating these).
13. Serve the rice immediately, while hot. Leftovers can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator and reheated in a 300 F oven or in a skillet over low heat.

KACHUMBARI (TOMATO AND ONION SALAD)

This crunchy, fresh salad is popular in Kenya but is also eaten throughout East Africa. You'll find similar versions in Tanzania and beyond. Its main components are tomatoes and onions, but cucumbers and avocado are regular additions, You can also add some minced fresh chilies if you'd like.

Serve with just about anything you can think of, from fish to chicken or alongside legumes. If you wait to add the avocado until you serve, you can make the salad up to a few hours in advance and just keep it covered at room temperature. Stir in the avocado just before serving.

INGREDIENTS (SERVES 4)

1 tablespoon kosher salt, plus more as needed

1 cup boiling water

1 small red onion, thinly sliced into half-moons

2 large tomatoes, diced

1 cucumber, peeled, seeded and diced

3 tablespoons freshly squeezed lime juice

1 ripe avocado, pitted, peeled, and diced

DIRECTIONS

1. Dissolve the salt in the boiling water in a small bowl.
2. Add the onion and mix well.
3. Let the onion soak while you chop the rest of your vegetables. This soaking will reduce the intensity of the raw onion.
4. Once the onion has soaked for at least 10 minutes, drain and transfer it to a medium bowl.
5. Add the tomatoes, cucumber, and lime juice and stir well to combine.
6. Season the vegetables to taste with salt if needed (it will depend on how much salt the onions held on to).
7. Gently stir in the avocado and serve immediately.