

Mujadara

weeAdventure©

Back in the early 90s, I had the privilege of being taught to cook Armenian and Arabic specialties by a special woman. She was one of those enviable cooks who never wrote things down. I had to follow her around, frantically writing notes in order to replicate her magic. It took me a few years to work out the kinks, but I think I've managed to do just that with this meal.

Many Middle Eastern dishes take hours to prepare, but Mujadara (pronounced *moo-ja-da-ra*) is not only easy, it's full of protein and deliciousness! I like to make this during the spring and summer because it is best served at room or cold temperatures. My kids request this in their lunchboxes more than any other item I make — it's *that* tasty.

Tools

- Frying pan
- Stock pot
- Measuring spoons
- Measuring cups

Ingredients

- 3/4 cup lentils, rinsed
- 1/2 cup basmati rice
- 2 to 2 1/2 cups water
- 4 to 5 medium onions, coarsely chopped
- 1 TBSP vegetable oil
- 1 1/2 tsp kosher salt
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil

Method

In frying pan, add vegetable oil and heat over medium-high flame. Add onions and cook until caramelized. One of the tricks to tasty mujadara is caramelized onions.

Meanwhile, add lentils, rice and water to stock pot (water should cover lentil/rice mixture with about an inch to spare). Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 45 minutes, stirring occasionally. If water gets too low, add small amounts to keep the mixture slightly liquid (you want it to be firm at the end of 45 minutes).

When the onions are done cooking, add them to the stock pot, stirring well to mix thoroughly.

When the lentils are cooked through, turn off heat. Stir well and add the olive oil. It is important to add the olive oil while the mixture is still warm, but do so after completely cooked. This is the second trick to tasty mujadara.