

inspired recipe

Vegetable Biryani

by Rosemarie Sellers

The beginning of a new year, the festivities are over and we have all made resolutions to have a healthy diet. In Ayurveda, this is the Kapha (earth) season where heavy, rich foods should be avoided. It's an opportunity to eat foods that are lighter on our digestion. Following a Sattvic diet (that which is pure, clean and wholesome) nourishes the body and maintains it in a peaceful state. It also calms the mind enabling it to function at its maximum potential. It leads to true health with a peaceful mind in control of a fit body and a balanced flow of energy between them.

This vegetable biryani is a favourite of mine; the aromatic spicy rice cooked with fresh vegetables makes a delicious main course. It's easy to prepare, inexpensive and a great supper dish when you've got friends coming over. Spices play an important part in Ayurveda for enzyme production and maintenance; they are the spice of life. Cardamom for digestion; cloves are a decongestant; coriander cools and is a diuretic; cumin antidotes overeating; turmeric is antiseptic and anti-inflammatory; and saffron strengthens the heart, improves circulation and builds the blood.

Serves 4-6

Ingredients:

175g/6oz basmati rice
2 whole cloves
Seeds of 2 cardamom pods
Generous pinch of saffron strands
450ml/¾ pint vegetable stock
2 garlic cloves
1 small onion, roughly chopped
1 tsp cumin seeds
1 tsp ground coriander

½ tsp turmeric
½ tsp chilli powder (optional)
1 large potato, peeled and cut into 1" cubes
2 carrots, sliced
½ cauliflower, broken into florets
60g/2oz French beans cut into 1" lengths
2 tbsp chopped coriander
2 tbsp lime juice
Salt & freshly ground pepper



Instructions

1. Infuse saffron in the hot vegetable stock
2. Put rice, cloves and cardamom seeds into large pan with vegetable stock and bring to boil
3. Reduce heat, cover and simmer for 20 minutes or until stock has been absorbed
4. Meanwhile put garlic cloves, onion, cumin seeds and coriander into a blender with 2 tbsp water and blend
5. Preheat oven to 180°C/350°F/Gas 4. Spoon spicy paste into a flameproof casserole and cook over low heat for 2 minutes, stirring occasionally.
6. Add the potatoes, carrots, cauliflower, beans and 6 tbsps water and cook over a low heat for a further 12 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the chopped coriander.
7. Spoon the rice over the vegetables. Sprinkle over the lime juice. Cook in the oven for 25 minutes or until the vegetables are tender. Fluff up the rice with a fork before serving and garnish with a sprig of fresh coriander.

Enjoy and if any of you are of Kapha (earth) constitution watch your portions and leave seconds for your Pitta (fire) and vata (air) cousins!



Rosemarie Sellers is an Ayurvedic Nutrition Therapist and Well-Being Coach.

email: rosemarie@ayurvedaforeveryone.com

web: www.ayurvedaforeveryone.com