

Persian Rice (version 2)

The best of America's Test Kitchen 2017

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2 cups basmati rice
1 tablespoon plus ¼ cup vegetable oil
¼ cup plain Greek yogurt
1 ½ teaspoons cumin seeds
2 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into 8 cubes
¼ cup minced fresh parsley



Photography:
Henri T. de Hahn

1. Place rice in fine-mesh strainer and rinse under cold running water until water runs clear. Place rinsed rice and 1 tablespoon salt in medium bowl and cover with 4 cups hot tap water. Stir gently to dissolve salt; let stand 15 minutes. Drain rice in fine-mesh strainer.
2. Meanwhile, bring 8 cups water to boil in Dutch oven over high heat. Add rice and 2 tablespoons salt. Boil briskly, stirring frequently, until rice is mostly tender with slight bite in center and grains are floating toward top of pot, 3 to 5 minutes (begin timing from when rice is added to pot).
3. Drain rice in large fine-mesh strainer and rinse with cold water to stop cooking, about 30 seconds. Rinse and dry the pot well to remove any residual starch. Brush bottom and 1 inch up the sides of pot with 1 tablespoon oil.
4. Whisk remaining ¼ cup oil, yogurt, 1 tablespoon cumin seeds, and ¼ teaspoon salt together in medium bowl. Add 2 cups par cooked rice and stir until combined. Spread yogurt-rice mixture evenly over bottom of prepared pot, packing it down well.
5. Stir remaining ½ teaspoon cumin seeds into remaining rice. Mound rice mixture in center of pot on top of yogurt-rice base (it should look like a small hill). Poke 8 evenly spaced holes through rice mound but not into yogurt-rice base (use handle end of a wooden spoon). Place 1 butter cube in each hole. Drizzle 1/3-cup water over rice mound.
6. Wrap pot lid with clean dishtowel and cover tightly, making sure towel is secure on top lid and away from heat. Cook over medium-high heat until rice on bottom is cracking and steam is coming from sides of pot, about 10 minutes, rotating pot halfway through for even cooking.
7. Reduce heat to medium-low and continue to cook until rice is tender and fluffy and crust is golden brown around edges, 30 to 35 minutes longer. Remove covered pot from heat and place on wet dishtowel set in rimmed baking sheet; let stand for 5 minutes.
8. Stir 2 tablespoons parsley into rice, making sure not to disturb crust on bottom of pot, and season with salt to taste. Gently spoon rice onto serving platter.
9. Using thin metal spatula, loosen edges of crust from pot, and then break crust into large pieces. Transfer pieces to serving platter, arranging evenly around rice. Sprinkle with remaining 2 tablespoons parsley and serve.