

Chestnut Rice

Delicious Middle Eastern Chestnut Rice with tender chicken, pine nuts, and warm spices. A festive one-pot dish perfect for special occasions.

15 min

PREP

20 min

COOK

35 min

TOTAL

4

SERVINGS

Medium

DIFFICULTY

Ingredients

- 0.7 lb chicken meat
- 2 cup rice
- 1 tbsp pine nut
- 2 tbsp black currant
- 5 tbsp sunflower oil
- 1 onion
- 1.1 lb chestnut
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp salt

Instructions

- 1 Prepare the chestnuts**

Score an X on the flat side of each chestnut with a knife. Boil 1.1 lb chestnuts in a large pot of water for 15-20 minutes until tender when pierced with a fork. Drain and peel while still warm, then cut into halves or quarters.
- 2 Cook the aromatics**

Heat 5 tbsp oil in a heavy-bottomed pot over medium heat (160°C/325°F). Add 0.7 lb finely chopped onions and cook, stirring occasionally, until soft and translucent, about 5-6 minutes.
- 3** Add 1.1 lb chopped chicken to the pot and cook, stirring frequently, until pieces are browned on all sides and any released liquid has evaporated, about 8-10 minutes.
- 4** Stir in 1 tbsp pine nuts and cook for 2-3 minutes until lightly golden and fragrant.

5 **Add rice and liquid**

Add 2 cups washed rice, 2 tbsp currants, 1 tsp salt, and 1 tsp ground cinnamon to the pot. Pour in 4 cups water and bring to a rolling boil over high heat.

6 Reduce heat to low, cover the pot, and simmer for 18-20 minutes until rice is tender and liquid is absorbed. Do not lift the lid during cooking.

7 **Finish and rest**

Gently fold the prepared chestnuts into the rice using a fork to avoid breaking the grains. Remove from heat and let stand covered for 10 minutes to steam and set.

8 Fluff the rice gently with a fork and transfer to a serving platter. Sprinkle with additional ground cinnamon if desired before serving.

Tips

Score an 'X' on each chestnut before cooking to prevent them from bursting and make peeling easier.

Rinse rice until the water runs clear to remove excess starch and ensure fluffy grains.

Toast pine nuts in a dry pan for 2-3 minutes to enhance their nutty flavor before adding to the dish.

Let the rice rest off heat for 10-15 minutes after cooking to allow the grains to firm up and absorb remaining moisture.

Use homemade chicken broth when possible for the richest flavor, or enhance store-bought broth with bay leaves and peppercorns.

Don't skip the final cinnamon sprinkle - it adds an essential aromatic finish that ties all the flavors together.

If chestnuts are hard to peel, return them briefly to boiling water to soften the inner skin.