

# Mujadara

Authentic Middle Eastern Mujadara recipe with lentils, rice, and caramelized onions. This hearty vegetarian dish is perfect for weeknight dinners.

15 min

PREP

1h

COOK

1h 15min

TOTAL

4

SERVINGS

Easy

DIFFICULTY

## Ingredients

- 1 cup rice
- 2 onion
- 3 cup water
- 1 cup olive oil
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1 tsp allspice
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp black pepper

## Instructions

### 1 Prepare the lentils

Rinse 1 cup lentils under cold running water until water runs clear. Place in a medium saucepan with 3 cups water and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to medium and simmer uncovered for 15-20 minutes until lentils are tender but still hold their shape when pressed with a fork.

### 2 Drain the lentils in a fine-mesh strainer and set aside.

### 3 Caramelize the onions

Heat 1/4 cup olive oil in a large heavy-bottomed skillet or Dutch oven over medium heat. Add the 2 sliced onions and cook, stirring occasionally, for 25-30 minutes until deep golden brown and caramelized.

### 4 Remove half of the caramelized onions with a slotted spoon and transfer to a paper towel-lined plate. Set aside for garnish.

## 5 Cook the rice

Add 1 cup rice to the remaining onions in the pan and stir to coat. Cook for 2-3 minutes until rice grains are lightly toasted and fragrant.

6 Add the cooked lentils, 1 teaspoon cumin, 1 teaspoon salt, 1 teaspoon black pepper, and 1 teaspoon turmeric. Stir well to combine all ingredients evenly.

7 Pour in 2½ cups hot water or vegetable broth and bring to a boil over high heat. Once boiling, reduce heat to low, cover with a tight-fitting lid, and simmer for 18-20 minutes until rice is tender and liquid is absorbed.

## 8 Finish and serve

Remove from heat and let stand covered for 5 minutes to steam. Fluff gently with a fork and transfer to a serving platter. Top with the reserved caramelized onions and serve immediately.

## Tips

**Master the Caramelized Onions:** Don't rush this crucial step. Cook onions slowly over medium-low heat for 25-30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Properly caramelized onions should be deep golden brown and sweet – this is what gives mujadara its signature flavor.

**Choose the Right Lentils:** Brown or green lentils work best as they hold their shape during cooking. Red lentils will break down and create a mushy texture, so avoid them for traditional mujadara.

**Toast Your Rice:** Briefly sauté the rice with the caramelized onions before adding liquid. This creates a nutty flavor and helps prevent the rice from becoming too soft or sticky.

**Use Quality Olive Oil:** Since olive oil is one of the few ingredients, using extra virgin olive oil will significantly impact the final flavor. The oil carries the caramelized onion flavors throughout the dish.

**Let It Rest:** After cooking, let the mujadara rest covered for 5-10 minutes off the heat. This allows the grains to finish absorbing moisture and results in better texture.

**Season in Layers:** Add salt to the lentils while cooking, season the onions as they caramelize, and taste for final seasoning before serving. This creates more complex, well-developed flavors.

**Make Extra Caramelized Onions:** Double the onion quantity and reserve half for garnishing. The crispy, golden onions on top provide textural contrast and visual appeal.

**Adjust Consistency:** If your mujadara seems too dry, add warm broth or water a few tablespoons at a time. If too wet, cook uncovered for a few more minutes to evaporate excess liquid.