



CLASSIC CHICKEN BIRYANI

The Farsi root for biryani, birian, means fried. The origins of the dish are unclear, since multiple nations make a number of variations on it. In biryani, the rice is traditionally fried in ghee before it is cooked, creating a characteristic texture, scent, and taste. The rice is usually seasoned with saffron or other aromatic spices as well. Once the rice is mixed with food cooked with biryani paste and the mixture is slowly cooked, the result is a complex, multi layered dish which is ideal for special occasions.

Serves: 6 | Difficulty: easy | Prep time: 10 -15 minutes | Cooking Time: 120 minutes

METHOD

Marinade:

1. In a large pot, heat oil and add cinnamon sticks, bay leaves, cardamom and cloves. When the whole spices are fragrant, add onions and fry until golden brown.
2. Pour the onion with spices and oil into a mixing bowl. Add salt, ground spices, cream, ginger and garlic paste and mix well.
3. Coat chicken pieces with this spice paste. Once cooled, refrigerate chicken for 6-8 hours.
4. Biryani: Boil lentils for 20-25 minutes or until just tender. Strain and keep warm. Rub salt on potatoes and deep-fry on a medium heat until cooked through and golden brown. Drain well on paper towel.
5. Meanwhile, par-cook Spekko Long Grain Rice in 1,5 litres of salted boiling water until it is almost cooked. Drain and keep warm.

6. Place marinated chicken in a large pot. Simmer on a low heat, adding water if necessary, until chicken is almost cooked. Remove from heat.
7. Add potatoes to chicken. Sprinkle half the lentils over chicken and potatoes. Cover with half the rice. Repeat the process, reserving some lentils for the top of the rice.
8. Roast saffron strands in a little pan. Remove from heat and crush gently. Steep crushed saffron in boiling water.
9. Pour saffron infusion over rice and dollop with butter. Cover with foil with the lid on top and simmer on a very low heat for 10 minutes. Alternatively, you could cook the biryani in the oven at 120 °C for 30 minutes. Garnish with crispy fried onion slices and coriander.

From the Spekko kitchen

For a healthier option, prepare the marinade with half the oil and substitute the cream with natural yoghurt. Don't be alarmed if the yoghurt curdles as this won't be in the final dish. Alternatively omit the cream or yoghurt completely. Deep-fried potatoes can be quite oily, substitute with boiled potatoes.

INGREDIENTS

Marinade

- 125 ml (½ cup) sunflower oil
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 2 bay leaves
- 5 cardamom pods, lightly crushed
- 4 whole cloves
- 2 onions, finely sliced
- 75 ml (5 tbsp) red chilli powder or to taste
- 10 ml (2 tsp) ground cumin
- 10 ml (2 tsp) ground coriander
- 200 ml cream
- 10 ml (2 tsp) ginger paste
- 75 ml (5 tbsp) garlic paste or to taste
- 1 x 1,5 kg whole chicken, portioned and skin removed
- salt to taste

Biryani

- 125 ml (½ cup) brown biryani or ordinary lentils
- 2,5 ml (½ tsp) salt
- 4 potatoes, quartered
- 600 ml Spekko Long Grain Parboiled Rice
- 10 ml (2 tsp) saffron
- 250 ml (1 cup) boiling water
- 45 ml (3 tbsp) butter
- crispy fried onions to garnish
- fresh coriander to garnish