



## Persian Rice

### A Delicious Gluten-Free Recipe

Preparation Time 1 hour | Cook Time 30 minutes | Serves 10

A slightly healthier take on the classic Persian Zaresh Polo, this show-stopping dish is worth the effort. Dramatic in its use of color and texture, it's a dish we find ourselves making on the weekends, and whenever we want to impress. Barberries can be tricky to track down, but online retailers and specialty grocers often stock them, and they're definitely worth getting your hands on for this dish.

### Ingredients

- 4 cups basmati rice
- 3 tablespoons salt
- 2 cups finely chopped onions
- 2 cup sliced onions
- 1 cup plus 4 tablespoons canola oil
- 1 cup dried barberries (*zereshk*)
- 1 cup Ziba raw Shakhurbai almonds
- 1 cup Ziba raw baby pistachios
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- 4 tablespoons butter
- Extra salt, to taste
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup +  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup water
- 1 medium potato, thinly sliced (skin on is fine)
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon saffron steeped in two tablespoons hot (but not boiling) water

### Equipment

7-quart stock pot  
Metal strainer  
Deep skillet  
Large stock pot  
Frying pan  
Clean kitchen towel  
Wooden spoon

### Instructions

1. Rinse the basmati rice, then soak in water for 15 minutes with a tablespoon of salt. Drain and set aside.
2. Prepare your toppings: Rinse the barberries and let drain, then set aside. Coarsely chop the almonds and pistachios, then lightly roast them in a 170°F oven for 10 minutes, taking care they do not burn.
3. Warm one cup of the canola oil in a deep skillet and fry the onion slices in the oil until they turn crisp and brown. Set aside onto a paper towel.

# ZIBA

FOODS

4. Fill 2/3 of the stockpot with water and set to boil on the stove. Add two tablespoons of salt to the water. Gently pour the rice into the water and stir. When the water returns to boiling, lower the flame and let it simmer uncovered for 5 minutes, then drain the rice into a metal strainer.
5. Dry the rice pot and return it to the stove. Add 2 tablespoons of canola oil. Lay the potato slices down on the bottom of the pan; this will make your *tahdig*—the deliciously crispy layer of potato and rice from the bottom of the pot. Put the rice back into the pot on top of the potatoes. Cover and let it all rest on your kitchen counter while you make the barberry-saffron topping.
6. In a frying pan, add 3 tablespoons of oil and sauté the two cups of chopped onions. When the onions begin to soften, add the barberries and stir. After a minute or so, stir in the sugar, 2 tablespoons of butter, and a pinch of salt. Lastly, add  $\frac{3}{4}$  cups of water into the skillet and mix, slowly cooking for 10 minutes, covered.
7. Take the lid off your pot of rice, and gently spoon the barberry mixture over the rice, leaving a space in the middle. Then, gently pour an additional  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup hot water in a circle around the rice (on top of the barberry and saffron mixture).
8. Using the handle of a wooden spoon, create a hole in the center of the rice all the way to the bottom of your pot—you should be able to see all the way down to the base of the pot. Wrap a clean kitchen towel around the underside of your pot lid, tying the corners to the lid handle, or to each other. Place the cloth-covered lid over the rice. Place on the stove on a hot burner for 3 minutes, then turn to low and allow the rice to steam for 20 minutes. It is important not to take the lid off the rice while it is cooking. Turn the stove off after 20 minutes.
9. When the rice is done, gently spoon the barberry mix into a separate bowl. You will see a section of the rice has turned yellow from the saffron. Place a large serving platter over the pot and flip the pot over so that you have the crispy layer of rice and potato on top, followed by the white and saffron rice layers. Spoon the barberry mixture on top of the rice, followed by a sprinkling of the almonds, pistachios, and fried onions.
10. Serve while hot and enjoy—and get ready to fight over the *tahdig*!

A Delicious Gluten-Free Recipe