

Asian Pilaf of Mixed Lentils, Eggplant and Basmati Brown Rice

Yield: 4 servings

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Ingredients:

- 4 Tablespoons mixed oils as olive and avocado or sesame and avocado, separated
- 1 med-large eggplant, peeled and cut into slivers
- 1 teaspoon sea salt
- ¼ cup chopped shallot
- 4 cloves minced garlic
- 1 tablespoon fresh grated turmeric and ginger
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin, coriander and garam masala, pinch of red pepper flakes
- ½ cup mixed bag of lentils, red, black, chana dal (you can buy mixed like that)
- ½ cup long grain brown rice
- 2 ½ cups water (or a little more when cooking if absorbing too fast)
- 1 tablespoon tamari (wheat-free soy) or coconut aminos
- 2 tablespoons tamarind paste, not from concentrate

Garnish: one red pepper chopped small, cilantro, chopped scallions

Procedure:

Soak the rice and lentils in separate bowl for 3 or 4 hours (makes this dish so creamy)

1. Slice the eggplant thin and then in strips, lay on paper towels and sprinkle with salt for 15 mins. (takes out bitterness) It will be wet after that so you need to dry before sauteing (I use a linen dish cloth to dry it) or use paper towel
2. In a sauté pan, heat 2 tablespoons of oil. Place the dried eggplant strips and sauté until a little brown on each side in 2 batches, drain, set aside on plate
3. In a 4-quart pot, heat 2 Tablespoons of the oil, sauté the shallot, then garlic, ginger, turmeric, stir a minute until fragrant. Add lentils, rice, eggplant, water, tamari and tamarind (mash tamarind with back of a wooden spoon)
4. Bring the above to a boil, stir, lower to a slow boil, cover pan, cook 30 mins. or until lentils and rice are cooked and water is absorbed. Add sea salt and pepper to taste. Add chopped red pepper, scallions and cilantro for garnish. Can serve over greens like sautéed collards or kale for perfection.

My Notes: I purchased the mixed bag of lentils and tamarind at my neighborhood Indian store. Buy everything organic for more flavor and nutrients. This is my favorite Dahl!

Chef's notes: I purchased the mixed bag of lentils in an Indian store. You can also use just red lentils. Buy everything organic for more flavor and nutrients