

# Middle Eastern Chicken Pilaf

Swick

Serves 1 | Active Time: 15 minutes | Total Time: 40 minutes

## Chef's Notes

\*Recipe for Ras el Hanout. If you don't want to make your own, you can either buy it or omit this part altogether. Here is some information on Aleppo Pepper.

\*\*The amount of stock needed will depend on the type of rice used, so check the packaging for the appropriate ratio of liquid to rice.

## Step 1: Browning the Chicken

- 6 chicken drumsticks (or thighs)
- 1/2 tsp ras el hanout\* (optional)
- 1 tbsp grapeseed oil
- kosher salt (to taste)
- freshly ground black pepper (to taste)

If desired, rub the chicken with the ras el hanout and let marinate for an hour or two (or even overnight) in the refrigerator.

To cook the chicken, first preheat the oven to 350°F (175° C).

Next, heat a large, oven-proof pot (with a lid) over medium-high heat. Once hot, add the oil, followed by the chicken. Brown the chicken on all sides. Cook it until it is almost done and then transfer it to a plate.

## Step 2: Cooking the Onions & Rice

- 1 large onion
- 1 1/2 cups basmati rice

Finely dice the onions and then add them to the pot. Once the onions are translucent and have browned, add the rice. Sauté the rice for a few minutes until it is translucent around the edges.

## Step 3: Adding the Spices

- 1/2 tsp turmeric
- 1/4 tsp cumin seeds
- 1/4 tsp coriander seeds
- 1/4 tsp Aleppo pepper
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 2 whole star anise
- 2 pieces dried orange peel (optional)

Once the rice is translucent around the edges, add the spices and sauté for a few minutes to bring out their aroma.

## Step 4: Adding Additional Ingredients

- 1/3 cup golden raisins
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 tsp kosher salt

Next, add the raisins, bay leaf and salt. Stir gently to combine.

## Step 5: Cooking the Dish

- 2 1/4 cups chicken stock (or vegetable stock)

Add the stock and stir to combine. Place the drumsticks back into the pot, making sure that they are pushed down into the liquid and rice. Bring the dish to a simmer. Then turn off the heat, cover and place into the oven. Cook for approximately 20 minutes or according to the instructions for the rice.

## Step 6: Toasting the Nuts (Optional)

- 1/4 cup pine nuts
- 1/4 cup sliced almonds

While the pilaf is cooking, toast the nuts until golden brown. Once done, set aside to cool.

## Step 7: Checking the Rice

Check the rice to see that all of the water has been absorbed and that the rice is cooked through and tender.

## Step 8: Resting the Rice

Once the rice is done, let the dish rest for at least 10 to 20 minutes.

## Step 9: Preparing the Garnish

- 1/4 bunch fresh cilantro
- kosher salt (to taste)
- freshly ground black pepper (to taste)

To serve the dish, fluff the rice and garnish with freshly chopped cilantro and toasted nuts, if using. Taste for seasoning.