

FLAVOURS OF MIDDLE EAST

MD BILLAL HOSSAIN
 Chef Qatar Airways
 First and Business Class Lounge



The best of the MIDDLE EAST

YOGHURT-TAHINA SAUCE

Ingredients

2 cup yoghurt
 1/4 cup Tahina
 1/2 cup water
 3 tbsp lemon juice
 2 garlic cloves, minced
 1/3 cup tomato sauce
 Salt and pepper

Method

Mix all ingredients in a bowl. Taste and use seasoning as preferred. Note — once everything is ready you can start plating. Place a layer of bread at the bottom of the dish; pour some broth or yoghurt-Tahina sauce. Cover with another layer and yoghurt-Tahina sauce over it. Place beef and more sauce on top; sprinkle toasted nuts and minced parsley. Serve cool.

ADANA KEBAB

Ingredients

500g ground beef, or lamb
 4 garlic cloves, chopped
 2 small onions, chopped
 2 tsp ground cumin
 1 tsp ground sumac
 Salt to taste
 1/2 tsp ground black pepper
 1 tsp red pepper flakes, or to taste
 2 tbsp water (ice cold)

Metal skewers, or wooden skewers (soaked in water)

1/2 cup parsley, chopped

Method

In a large bowl of water combine the ground lamb, chopped onion, garlic, parsley, 1 teaspoon of ground cumin, 1 teaspoon of ground sumac, salt, ground black pepper, red pepper flakes, and ice water in a large bowl.

Knead the mixture by hand until it starts sticking to the side of the bowl. Place in the refrigerator for about 30 minutes to chill. Wet your hands and place a quarter of the lamb mixture onto each skewer.

Tip— use a 1-ounce scoop to form balls and thread them onto the skewer and mash them together. Grill the kebabs, for approximately 8 to 10 minutes, or until well charred on both sides. Combine ground cumin and sumac, and sprinkle over the kebabs while they are cooking. Serve kebabs on warm pita or naan with sliced red onions, parsley, tomatoes, and diced cucumbers.

For tomato sauce —

1 tbsp olive oil
 1 tsp onion powder
 1 tsp garlic powder
 2 tomatoes, chopped
 2 tbsp tomato paste
 Little parsley, salt to taste

Method

Mix milk with breadcrumbs and add to the minced meat. Now add spices, mix well, and add parsley. Let the mixture chill in the fridge for an hour. Form medium sized balls and shape them into 7-inch long sausages, preheat the grill or oven and place them on the grill or tray (if using an oven), and cook for about 15 minutes, making sure to turn them often.

To prepare the tomato sauce, heat oil in a saucepan over medium heat, add chopped tomatoes, onion powder, garlic powder, and tomato paste, salt and pepper to taste, and cook for a couple of minutes or until smooth.

Roll the cooked kebab pieces with a tortilla or pita bread, and cut into bite-size pieces and place kebabs on a platter. Serve with special tomato sauce on the side, and a sprinkle of flat parsley.

MIDDLE EASTERN BEEF STEW WITH GREEN BEANS (IRANIAN BEEF STEW)

Ingredients

1 kg beef, cut into 1-inch cubes
 1/4 cup olive oil
 3 medium onions, chopped
 5 cloves garlic, minced

Method

Mix cumin, pepper, coriander, turmeric, cloves, cardamom, nutmeg, and cinnamon together. (Just 1 tablespoon of this spice mixture is necessary for this recipe. That means you can prepare this dish at least seven more times) Heat olive oil in a large pot, add onions and garlic, and sauté until onions are tender. Add beef, and cook until it is browned on all sides. Add tomatoes, cilantro, salt and the spice mixture, and stir for about 4 minutes. Add the broth and bring to a boil, then add the prunes. Reduce heat and cover. Simmer over low heat for 1 hour. Add green beans and green chilli, and cook for another 15 minutes or until the meat is soft. Garnish with additional fresh cilantro and serve hot, with basmati rice or pita bread.

MIDDLE EASTERN BEEF SHISH KEBAB

Ingredients

500g beef tenderloin, cut into 1-inch cubes
 1 tsp lemon juice or white vinegar
 2 tsp garlic (mince)
 2 tsp paprika
 1/2 cup yoghurt
 1 tsp cumin powder
 1/2 cup olive oil
 1 tsp coriander powder
 Flat parsley, chopped a little
 Olive oil

Note — You may include wedges of red onions, baby corn, bell peppers, and mushrooms

Method

In a bowl, combine olive oil, vinegar, cumin,

MIDDLE EASTERN BEEF FATTEH

Ingredients

For beef —

1 kg beef tenderloin, cubed
 1 tbsp paprika powder
 1 tsp garlic, chopped
 1 tsp black pepper
 4 tbsp olive oil
 1 tsp cumin powder
 1 tsp coriander powder
 1/2 cup yoghurt
 Some lemon juice
 Salt to taste

Method

Season beef with salt, pepper, paprika, yoghurt, cumin and ground coriander, lemon juice, garlic, olive oil and refrigerate for 2 hours. Preheat oven to 350°F. Remove beef from the fridge. Bake at 350°F 30 min or until golden browned.

Bread —

Use about 3-pieces of Arabic bread per serving. Cut them into 2-cm square pieces; drizzle olive oil, and toast until nicely golden.

Nuts —

Sliced almonds, pistachios, and pine nuts in the mix. Toast with some butter oil and keep aside.

JEWELLED RICE

Ingredients

1/2 tsp saffron threads
 50g raisins, soaked and drained
 25g pistachio
 25g almond
 Seeds of 1 pomegranate (to garnish)
 1/4 tsp fennel seeds
 1/4 tsp cumin seeds
 1 orange, peeled and cut
 1/4 cup dried tart cherries
 1/4 cup dried Turkish apricots, diced
 Vegetable ghee, for frying
 1 large onion, sliced
 1 bay leaf
 Cardamom and cinnamon
 Nutmeg powder
 Salt to taste
 Black pepper
 1 tsp garam masala powder
 1 tsp ginger and garlic paste
 3 pieces green chilli
 500g basmati rice
 800ml hot water

Method

Mix saffron threads in 1/4 cups of hot water. Set aside. Wash rice until water is clear. Then soak and keep aside for 15 minutes. Now strain.

Melt some butter in a frying pan and sauté raisins. Now, in a large skillet sauté fennel and cumin seeds until they are fragrant, just a minute. Add cinnamon, cardamom, bay leaves and stir to combine.

Add onion and sauté over low heat until the onion is light brown. Then add garlic and ginger paste. Cook for about 5 minutes. Add in the rice and sauté for few minutes.

Add other spices when the rice is hot. Pour in the saffron infused water, along with lemon rinds.

Stir to combine, season with salt and fresh cracked black pepper. Add in the fruit and nuts, stir to combine, and cover the skillet with a tight fitting lid. Cook on low to medium heat for about 15 minutes, then turn off the heat and let it sit, covered, for another 10 minutes. When the rice is done, fluff it and spread on a large platter. Scatter the pomegranate and all fruits on top to garnish.

Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed

Food: Khazana



BEYTI KEBAB (MIDDLE EASTERN TURKISH KEBAB)

Ingredients

1 kg ground lamb or beef with little fat
 3 tsp cumin powder
 3 tsp coriander powder
 Some parsley, chopped
 1 tsp ground black pepper
 1 tsp red chilli flakes
 2 tbsp breadcrumbs
 1 tbsp milk
 Salt to taste
 Yoghurt
 Tortilla bread (lavas)

2 medium tomatoes, seeded and chopped
 1/3 cup fresh cilantro, chopped
 2 cups beef broth
 250g cut green beans
 2 tbsp ground cumin
 1 tsp turmeric powder
 2 tbsp freshly ground black pepper
 1 tsp ground coriander
 6 green chillies
 1 tsp ground cloves
 1/2 tsp ground cardamom
 1/2 tsp nutmeg (freshly ground)
 A pinch of ground cinnamon
 1/3 cup prunes
 Salt to taste

coriander, yoghurt, paprika, and garlic parsley, mix well, add beef cubes, and add little olive oil. Pour marinade into a freezer bag. Allow to marinate in the refrigerator for minimum 2 hours or until ready to grill. Remove beef from the refrigerator and thread meat onto skewers that have been sprayed with olive oil. If using the optional vegetables, thread them onto separate skewers because they cook differently than the beef. First grill the vegetables. Spray grill with olive oil to prevent sticking. Grill for 5 to 7 minutes on each side or until done. Serve kebabs and grilled vegetables, with pita bread or rice.

LIFE STYLE