

Cooking with Kids

East Indian Lentils, Carrot Rice Pilaf, Chapatis, and Fruit Salad

Serves 4 to 6

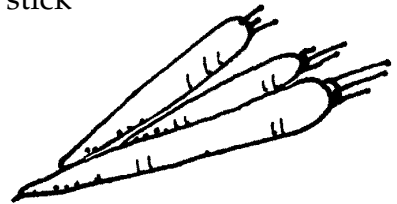
In India, lentils and rice are everyday foods for millions of people. Lentils are inexpensive, nutritious, and can be prepared in a multitude of ways. Did you know that people have been eating lentils for thousands of years?

East Indian Lentils

1 cup lentils, sorted & rinsed
4 cups water
2 tablespoons butter
2 garlic cloves, minced
½ teaspoon cumin seed
2 teaspoons ground red chile
½ teaspoon ground coriander
4 medium tomatoes, diced
½ teaspoon salt, or to taste
4 tablespoons minced cilantro

Carrot Rice Pilaf

1½ cups basmati rice
2 tablespoons butter
¾ cup peeled and grated carrot
3½ cups water
1 inch cinnamon stick
½ teaspoon salt



Cook the lentils: In a saucepan, bring the water and lentils to a boil over high heat. Skim off the foam that appears. Reduce the heat to low, partially cover, and simmer about 45 minutes, stirring occasionally, until tender. Add water as needed to keep the lentils covered as they cook.

In another saucepan, melt the butter over medium-high heat. Add the garlic and cumin seed and sauté until fragrant, but not brown. Add the chile and coriander and stir for 20 seconds more. Stir in the tomatoes, salt, and lentils, along with the juice. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat to low and simmer for 5 to 10 minutes, uncovered. Remove from the heat and cover. Just before serving, stir in the cilantro. Traditionally, lentils are spooned over rice and served in bowls.

Make the pilaf: Put the rice into a bowl with cool water. Swirl the rice around and then pour off the water. Repeat this process 2 or 3 times, until the water is clear.

In a saucepan, melt the butter over medium-high heat. Add the rice and grated carrots and sauté for 2 minutes. Add the water, cinnamon stick, and salt. Bring to a boil, uncovered, for 2 minutes. Reduce the heat to medium-low and cover. Cook the rice for about 20 minutes, until all of the liquid has been absorbed. Remove from heat. Let the rice rest for 10 minutes before serving.

Fruit Salad

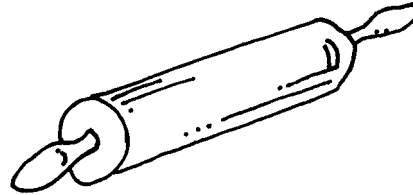
- 2 bananas, peeled and sliced
- 1 ripe mango, peeled and cut into ½-inch pieces
- 2 oranges, peeled and cut into ¾-inch pieces
- 2 tablespoons unsweetened shredded or shaved coconut
- 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice

In a bowl, combine all the ingredients and stir lightly. Serve immediately.

Chapatis (Indian Flatbreads)

Makes 16 chapatis

- 3 cups unbleached white flour
- 1 cup whole wheat flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ¼ cup butter, melted
- 1½ cups warm water



In a bowl, mix together the unbleached white flour, whole wheat flour, and salt. Stir in the melted butter. Next, add the water gradually, until a soft dough is formed.

On a lightly floured clean work surface, knead the dough for about 5 minutes. Shape the dough into a ball and return it to the mixing bowl. Cover with a clean cloth and let rest for at least 20 minutes and up to 2 hours.

Divide the dough into 16 equal pieces. Form each piece into a ball. Use a rolling pin to roll out each ball of dough into a circle that is about 4 inches in diameter.

Cook the chapatis on a hot griddle for 2 to 3 minutes on each side, until lightly browned and slightly puffed. Stack the cooked chapatis on a plate and cover with a clean cloth. Serve warm.