

Afghani Kabuli Pulao with Lamb Shanks: Authentic & Flavorful Recipe

Prepare to embark on a culinary journey to Afghanistan with this magnificent



OVEN
300°F

TIME
30 min

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Recipe Card

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INGREDIENTS

- 2 to 3 lamb shanks (about 1-1.5 lbs each)
 - 1 large onion, sliced
 - 6 cloves garlic, crushed
 - 1 inch ginger, sliced
 - 1 cinnamon stick
 - 4 green cardamoms (whole)
 - 4 cloves (whole)
 - 6 black peppercorns (whole)
 - Salt - to taste
 - Water - as needed (for pressure cooking or simmering)
 - 2 cups Basmati rice (soaked for 30 minutes)
 - 2 tbsp oil/ghee
 - 1 onion, finely chopped
 - 4 cups lamb stock (reserved from cooking the lamb)
 - 2 carrots, julienned
 - ... cup raisins (golden or dark)
 - 1 tsp sugar (optional, for extra caramelization)
 - 2 tbsp pistachios or almonds, slivered (optional, for garnish and crunch)
 - 1 tbsp ghee or oil
- Swaps and Notes:
- Lamb Shanks: Lamb shoulder or boneless lamb leg (cut into large chunks) can be used, but shanks offer the classic presentation and incredibly tender meat.

Whole Spices (Lamb): These are essential for the aromatic lamb stock. Do not substitute with ground spices in this step.

Basmati Rice: Long-grain Basmati rice is crucial for its fragrance and separate grains. Do not use regular white rice. Soaking helps achieve the perfect fluffy texture.

Oil/Ghee (Rice & Topping): Ghee offers a traditional, rich flavor. Olive oil or a neutral vegetable oil can be used.

Carrots: Julienne cut is traditional and beautiful. Shredded carrots also work.

Raisins: Golden or dark raisins are fine.

Sugar (Topping): Optional for extra sweetness and to help caramelize the carrots and plump the raisins.

Pistachios/Almonds (Topping): Optional but highly recommended for traditional presentation and a delightful crunch.

DIRECTIONS

1. Let's cook this majestic : Afghani Kabuli Pulao!
2. Cook the : Lamb: In a pressure cooker or a large, deep pot, add the lamb shanks, the large sliced onion, 6 crushed garlic cloves, 1-inch sliced ginger, 1 cinnamon stick, 4 whole green cardamoms, 4 whole cloves, 6 black peppercorns, and salt to taste.
3. Add enough water to generously cover the meat (at least 6-8 cups if not pressure cooking).
4. Pressure : Cooker Method: Cook on high pressure for about 30 minutes.
5. Stovetop : Simmer Method: Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to low, cover, and slow simmer for 1.5-2 hours, or until the lamb shanks are incredibly tender and nearly falling off the bone.
6. Once cooked, carefully remove the lamb shanks from the pot. Strain the cooking liquid through a fine-mesh sieve into a separate bowl. This is your flavorful lamb stock. Discard the cooked onion, garlic, ginger, and whole spices. You should have approximately 4 cups of clear lamb stock for the rice.
7. Prepare the : Carrot & Raisin Topping: Heat 1 tablespoon of ghee or oil in a medium pan over medium heat. Add the julienned carrots and sauté for about 2 minutes until they begin to soften.
8. Add the ... cup of raisins, 1 teaspoon of sugar (if using), and the 2 tablespoons of slivered pistachios or almonds (if using) to the pan. Continue to cook, stirring, until the carrots are fully soft and lightly caramelized, and the raisins have plumped up. Set this topping mixture aside.
9. Cook the : Rice: In a large, heavy-bottomed pot (or

the cleaned Dutch oven you used for lamb), heat 2 tablespoons of oil or ghee over medium heat.

10. Add the finely chopped onion and sauté until it turns golden brown, about 5-7 minutes.
11. Drain the soaked : Basmati rice thoroughly. Add the drained rice to the pot with the sautéed onion. Stir gently for 1-2 minutes, allowing the rice to toast slightly.
12. Carefully add exactly 4 cups of the reserved lamb stock to the rice. Taste the stock and adjust salt if needed, remembering that the lamb was seasoned. The ratio of stock to rice should be approximately 1.5 times the rice quantity, or adjust based on your rice type.
13. Bring the liquid to a boil on medium heat. Once boiling, reduce the heat to very low, cover the pot tightly with a lid, and let it simmer for 10 minutes. Do not open the lid during this time! Then, turn off the heat and let the rice steam, still covered, for an additional 10 minutes. This steaming process ensures perfectly fluffy, separate grains.
14. Assemble and : Serve: Gently fluff the cooked Basmati rice with a fork and place it generously on a large serving platter.
15. Arrange the tender lamb shanks artfully over the rice.
16. Spoon the sautéed carrot and raisin mixture generously over the lamb and rice.
17. Serve hot with traditional accompaniments.
18. Serving : Suggestion: Serve hot with a crisp green salad, a cooling yogurt raita, or a spicy Afghani chutney for a truly authentic experience.

SWAPS & NOTES

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TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Tender Lamb: The key to great Kabuli Pulao is fall-off-the-bone tender lamb.

Don't rush the cooking process in step 1.

Perfect Rice: Soaking Basmati rice prevents it from breaking and helps it cook evenly and fluffily.

The simmering and steaming method is crucial for separate grains.

More recipes: [ChefManiac.com](https://chefmaniac.com)

Original recipe: <https://chefmaniac.com/afghani-kabuli-pulao-with-lamb-shanks-authentic-flavorful-recipe/>