

Saffron Rice Pudding

Makes 8 servings
Preparation time: 5 minutes
Cooking time: 1 hour
40 minutes

شله زرد

Sholeh zard

1 cup (200g) white rice, soaked for 30 minutes, drained and rinsed
1/2 teaspoon sea salt
8 cups (1.9l) water
1 3/4 cups (350g) sugar
1/4 cup (60ml) oil or unsalted butter
1/2 cup (85g) raw blanched almonds
1/2 teaspoon ground saffron dissolved in 2 tablespoons hot water
1 tablespoon ground cardamom

1/2 cup (120ml) rose water

GARNISH

2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
2 teaspoons slivered almonds
1/4 cup (30g) candied orange peel, chopped (page 540 or store bought)
2 teaspoons slivered pistachios

This rich, delicious vegan saffron rice pudding is associated with sofrehs and the giving of alms during religious ceremonies. It also makes a wonderful chilled dessert in small portions.

1. In a large pot, combine the rice and salt with 8 cups/1.9l water, and bring to a boil, skimming the foam as it rises. Cover and simmer for 35 minutes over medium heat, stirring occasionally, with a long wooden spoon, until the rice is quite soft.
2. Add the sugar, stirring constantly for 5 to 10 minutes until the sugar has dissolved.
3. Add the oil, almonds, saffron water, cardamom, and rose water. Stir well. Reduce heat to **very low**, wrap the lid with clean towel and cover tightly. Steep for 50 minutes.
4. Remove from heat and immediately spoon the pudding into individual serving bowls or a large bowl. Decorate right away according to your fancy (before the pudding has cooled) with cinnamon, almonds, orange peel, and pistachios. Allow to cool at room temperature, cover and chill in refrigerator.
5. Serve the pudding chilled. *Nush-e Jan!*