THE STIRRING LIFE

Iraqi Chicken Curry

With saffron and rose water rice

Warm and cozy, a little tangy from the noomi basra
Spooned over fragrant saffron rice with a hint of rose water

INGREDIENTS

The Curry

- 2 large onions, finely chopped
- 5 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 Tbsp butter
- 1 whole chicken, cut into pieces, plus 2 chicken breasts
- 3 large Idaho potatoes, peeled and cubed
- 12 oz tomato paste
- 2–3 Tbsp curry powder
- 1 Tbsp noomi basra
- 6 cups water, plus more as needed
- Salt, to taste

The Rice

- 4 cups basmati rice, rinsed or soaked and drained
- 4 generous Tbsp olive oil
- 4¾ cups chicken stock or water
- 1 Tbsp concentrated chicken stock, only if using water
- 4–5 tsp salt, or to taste
- 1 tsp crushed saffron
- ⅛ cup rose water
- Pinch of turmeric, optional, for color

INSTRUCTIONS

The Curry

1. Soften the onions. Melt the butter in a large pot. Add the onions and garlic and sauté until soft and translucent.
2. Build the fond. Add the curry powder, noomi basra and tomato paste. Cook, stirring often, until the paste darkens slightly and starts to caramelize on the bottom of the pot.
3. Add the chicken. Pour in the water and bring to a boil. Add the chicken and cook about 20 minutes, until partially cooked through.
4. Add the potatoes. Add the potatoes and season with salt. Simmer until the chicken is cooked through, the potatoes are tender but still holding their shape, and the sauce has thickened. Add a little more water as you go to keep it nice and saucy.

The Rice

1. Rinse the rice. Rinse the basmati very well, or soak it beforehand, then drain.
2. Season the liquid. In a large saucepan combine the olive oil, stock or water, salt, saffron, rose water and the turmeric if using. If you are using water, add the concentrated chicken stock here.
3. Cook it. Bring to a boil, then stir in the drained rice. Cover, drop the heat to low, and cook until the liquid is absorbed and the rice is tender, about 20 minutes.
4. Rest and fluff. Off the heat, let it sit covered 5 to 10 minutes, then fluff gently with a fork. Spoon the curry generously over the top.

**Noomi basra is Iraqi dried lime, and it is what makes this taste like my mother-in-law's. It goes in whole with the curry powder and tomato paste, and gives the whole pot its tang.*