

## MISHTI PULAO: BENGALI SWEET RICE

A traditional Bengali rice dish for special occasions. It is fragrant, rich and has a mild sweetness, which compliments rich non-veg (meat) Bengali dishes. Timing is very important, so after washing the rice, soaking the rice for **30** minutes will allow the cooking times given below. The amount of water to rice is also important. Too much water will lead to clumpy rice so the 3 ¾ cups water is perfect for 2 cups of **GOVINDOBHOG** rice. Govindobog rice is a fragrant small grain rice from West Bengal and works best in this dish. An alternative rice is CHINIGURA from Bangladesh. Like cooking a Spanish Paella, which calls for Valencia rice, the kind and quality of rice is most important for this dish. If neither of the above rice are available, **aged basmati** may be used.

Cooking Time: 30 minutes

Ready to Eat: 60 minutes

### Ingredients

- 2 cups govindobog rice
- 10-12 pieces raw cashews
- 10-15 golden raisins or *kishmish*
- 2 small cinnamon sticks
- 2 green cardamon pods
- 2-3 cloves
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 teaspoons of *garam masala*
- 2 teaspoons turmeric
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 3-4 tablespoons sugar
- 1 pinch saffron
- 2 drops rosewater
- 4 tablespoons *ghee*

### Instructions

1. Wash the rice until water is clear, soak for 30 minutes. Soak the raisins. Drain rice in a strainer. Drain raisins.
2. In big heavy pot with lid add 2 tablespoons of *ghee*, fry cashews lightly until golden brown, drain and set aside. Add 1 more tablespoon *ghee*, then add cinnamon sticks, cardamon, cloves and bay leaves and fry until they sputter. Stir in the drained rice on medium heat and add the *garam masala* and turmeric, stirring gently until the rice turns opaque. Add cashes and raisins.
3. In another pot bring to boil 3 ¾ cups water, add salt, sugar, rosewater and saffron. Mix and add 1 tablespoon *ghee*.
4. Pour the water mixture into the rice, turn on high and cook uncovered until no water is visible and big bubbles begin to form, about 5-7 minutes. Lower heat to medium, cover the pot and cook for another 5 minutes. Turn off heat, let sit for 10 minutes (no peeking). Open the lid, fluff with a fork, cover for another 5 minutes. *Mishti pulao* is now ready! Enjoy!