



# Cooking around the World

March 5 - Lebanon, with Julia Issa-Ghantous



Lebanon consists of a land of golden beaches and stunning mountain landscapes. Landscapes that change with the seasons, but are always bathed in the warm sun. The daylight rising over Lebanon brings endless opportunities of fun, beach, nature and outdoor activities. Lebanon's diverse patchwork of Mediterranean-lapped coast, rugged alpine peaks, and green fertile valleys is packed into a parcel of land some 225km long and 46km wide – an area approximately the size of Connecticut.

## About the Lebanese Cuisine:

The Lebanese gastronomy is a rich mixture of various products and ingredients coming from the diverse Lebanese regions. Olive oil, herbs, spices, fresh fruits and vegetables are commonly used, as well as dairy

products, cereals, fishes and meat. Mezza are the traditional small plates served at the beginning of every proper Lebanese meal. Mezza are a feast for the eyes and the appetite.

The main dishes follow the Mezza. The main dishes can vary greatly. At least one main dish is served with a salad and bread. There may be additional dishes served. Poultry, beef and lamb are most common.



Photo from: **Palme de Beirut Restaurant, Zurich**

Although simple fresh fruits are often served towards the end of a Lebanese meal, there is also dessert. Social events play a significant role in the Lebanese gastronomy, as some dishes are particularly prepared on special occasions: the Meghli desert, for instance is served to celebrate a newborn baby in the family.

Sources:

<http://www.galavante.com/travel/cooling-your-jets/2010/10/lebanese-meze-feast>

More about Lebanon: <http://www.kwintessential.co.uk/resources/global-etiquette/lebanon.html>

# Lebanese Chicken with Rice

## Ingredients:

Whole chicken (boiled, skinned/de-boned)

- 2 lbs. lean ground beef
- 2 cups white long grain rice
- 4 cups chicken stock
- 2 teaspoons vegetable oil
- 1 small onion chopped
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 1 teaspoons ground nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground allspice
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/4 cup raw pine nuts, roasted
- 1/4 cup almonds, roasted
- 1 tablespoon butter



Photo from: <http://www.ablas.com.au/recipe1.html>

## Instructions:

1. In a deep pan, sauté the chopped onion with 2 tablespoons of vegetable oil until golden.
2. Add ground meat and keep on cooking until meat turns brown.
3. Wash the rice and drain the water. Then add rice to the beef and add, salt, pepper, cinnamon, allspice and nutmeg. Toss for 2 min then add 4 cups of chicken broth. Cover and let it simmer for 25 min or until rice is tender and well cooked.
4. In a frying pan melt butter then add pine nuts and almonds and keep stirring until the nuts are golden brown. Remove from heat let nuts drain on paper towel.
5. To serve, put the rice in a large plate, place the chicken pieces on top. Sprinkle with the roasted almonds and pine nuts.

Chicken stock: Add 1 onion, cinnamon stick, cardamom pods and bay leaves to the water. Cover the pan with a lid keeping a small opening to prevent the water to overflow while boiling. Keep on medium heat until the chicken is well cooked.

Once cooked, remove the chicken from the saucepan discard bones and skin. Set aside. Strain the chicken broth and keep aside for later use.

# Lebanese Fattoush Salad

1/2 Lebanese round bread (pita), toasted  
3 medium firm tomatoes, washed and chopped  
3 cucumbers (250g\9 oz), washed and chopped  
3 medium radishes (250g\9 oz) (1 cup), washed and chopped  
4 spring onions, washed and coarsely chopped  
1 medium onion (1/4 cup), chopped  
1 cup coarsely chopped fresh mint leaves  
1 cup coarsely chopped parsley  
1/2 cup coarsely chopped sweet green pepper  
8 (2 cups) lettuce leaves, chopped

## Dressing:

1 teaspoon pomegranate molasse (optional)  
1 teaspoon salt  
1/2 teaspoon ground sumac  
1/2 cup lemon juice  
2 cloves garlic, crushed with a pinch of salt  
1/2 teaspoon dried mint  
2 tablespoons vinegar  
1/2 cup olive oil



Photo from: <http://arabic-food.blogspot.com/2009/12/authentic-lebanese-fattoush-salad.html>

## Instructions:

1. Break toasted bread into small pieces and keep aside.
2. Wash the chopped mint and parsley, and then drain well.
3. Mix crushed garlic with salt, oil, vinegar, dried mint, lemon juice and ground sumac, pomegranate molasses and keep aside.
4. Put all ingredients in a serving bowl. Add toasted bread pieces and dress with garlic mixture, mix well.
5. Serve fattoush if you wish garnished with additional toasted bread

# Loubyieh Bil Zeit

*(Green Beans with Olive Oil)*

## Ingredients:

2 bags frozen Italian green beans

1 bag fava beans

2 medium chopped onions

3 tablespoons olive oil

1 teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon black pepper

¼ teaspoon cinnamon



Photo from <http://italyville.com>

## Instructions:

1. In a pan sauté onions with olive oil until caramelized.
  2. Add Italian Green beans and fava beans and stir.
  3. Add salt, pepper and cinnamon.
  4. Cover lid and let beans simmer for 30 to 45 minutes until beans are tender and well cooked.
- This could be served as a side dish and could be eaten with pita bread or as a main dish with salad.

**Sahtain**