



Sugar Apple

Posts From The Caribbean

Egyptian Lentils and Rice

I adapted this recipe from one by Claudia Roden that I cut out of *Food & Wine* magazine a few years ago and only recently got around to trying. If you can, try to find roasted ground cumin, sold in Indian shops and called roasted geera or jeera. It's a lot more flavorful than regular cumin. I've just come across a site called EverythingTrini.com which sells a lot of the Caribbean products I mention on the blog. I've never ordered from them but you might want to check it out.

5 tablespoons olive oil
2 large onions, peeled, cut in half and thinly sliced
1 1/4 cups brown lentils
5 1/2 cups water
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
1 1/2 cups long grain rice
salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

1 cup plain yogurt
2 cloves garlic
pinch of coarse salt
1 teaspoon lemon juice
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin

Heat 3 tablespoons of the oil in a large skillet over low heat. Add the onions and cook gently until they're soft and golden, about 20 minutes.

Combine the lentils, water and 1/2 teaspoon cumin in a medium saucepan (I used a 4-quart Le Crueset French oven, a.k.a. Dutch oven...nice and heavy duty). Bring to a boil and lower the heat to low and cook until the lentils are starting to soften but aren't cooked through, about 15 minutes. Add half the onions, the rice, 1 tablespoon olive oil and salt and pepper to taste. Cover and cook over low heat until the rice and lentils are cooked through, about 20 minutes.

While you're cooking the rice, cook the remainder of the onions over high heat until they're dark brown and caramelized. Give them a stir every few minutes so they don't catch and burn.

To make the yogurt sauce, mash the garlic and a pinch of coarse salt to a paste using a mortar and pestle. If you don't have a mortar and pestle, chop the garlic as finely as you can. Put the yogurt, mashed garlic, lemon juice and cumin in a bowl and mix.

To serve, turn the rice and lentils into a serving bowl and drizzle the last tablespoon of olive oil over the top. Garnish with the caramelized onions and serve with the yogurt sauce. The *recipe in the magazine says it serves six but it would easily serve eight to ten.*

<http://www.abigailblake.com/sugarapple>

from the article *Egyptian Lentils and Rice* posted on November 8, 2009