

Eight Treasures Rice Pudding

Makes 8 servings

1-1/4 cups glutinous rice (sweet rice)

1 tablespoon sugar

1/2 cup lotus seed paste or red bean paste

Toppings: (your choice)

- Mixed dried fruit (eg. apricots, persimmon, cranberry, apples, raisins)
- Pistachios or other nuts
- Dried red dates, seeds removed
- Dried dragon's eye
- Pumpkin seeds

Syrup:

2/3 cup water

3 tablespoons coconut milk or 1 tablespoon ginger juice

1/3 cup sugar

1-1/2 teaspoons cornstarch mixed with 1 tablespoon water

4 teaspoons Triple Sec or Grand Marnier (optional)

Garnish:

Shredded coconut

Chopped pistachios

Soak rice in warm water to cover for 2 hours or overnight; drain well. Toss with sugar.

To assemble:

- Coat or spray a bowl to prevent rice from sticking
- Arrange an even layer of half of toppings of your choice attractively on bottom of bowl.
- Form lotus seed paste into a two flat circles, slightly smaller than diameter of bowl and lay one circle on top of the toppings.
- Place half the rice over paste.
- Layer remaining toppings and lotus paste on top of rice.
- Place remaining half of rice on top, gently pressing rice down with a spoon to flatten.

Cooking:

- Place bowl in a steamer or on a rack in a wok. Cover and steam rice pudding over medium heat for 50 minutes to 1 hour, replenishing water if needed.
- While pudding is steaming, heat water, coconut milk and sugar in a small saucepan. Cook over medium heat, stirring, until syrup is reduced by about half. Thicken with cornstarch solution. Just before serving, add Triple Sec and mix well.

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Serving:

- Place a serving plate over rice pudding bowl and invert, gently shaking to unmold. Pour hot syrup over pudding. Sprinkle with shredded coconut and chopped pistachios; serve.

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