

November - Cook a dish from another country

Each month, we'll flag up something which lets you complete a Simple Act – whether it's a book about exile or a few weird and wonderful words in a new language. This month we're licking our lips after cooking a few dishes from another country!

Qabuli Palow

Country of origin: Afghanistan

Offered by: the Hassanzai Family in Newham

To feed: 9 – 10 people

Suitable for: Veggie-friendly, but can add meat.

Cooking time: 40 minutes

Ingredients

- 5 cups of rice
- 4 carrots
- 1/2 cup red raisins
- 2 tbsp pistachios
- 2 tbsp almonds
- 1/2 tsp cardamom
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1/2 cup corn oil
- 1 tsp geera (cumin)

Cooking method

- Wash the rice early on in the morning and leave it to soak for 6-7 hours.
- Slice the carrots into thin slices and fry them in oil for 5 minutes.
- Add the raisins and fry for 1 minute.
- Take the carrots and raisins out of the oil.
- Chop the pistachios and almonds and add them to the carrots and raisins.
- Grind the cardamom and sprinkle on top.
- Boil the rice in salted water until almost cooked.
- Add 1 tsp sugar to the oil used for the carrots and cook until the sugar is brown.
- Then add it to the rice and stir.
- Add the carrots, raisins, pistachios and almonds.
- Add 1 tsp cumin.
- Put the rice on a very low heat and cover.
- Cook for 30 minutes.

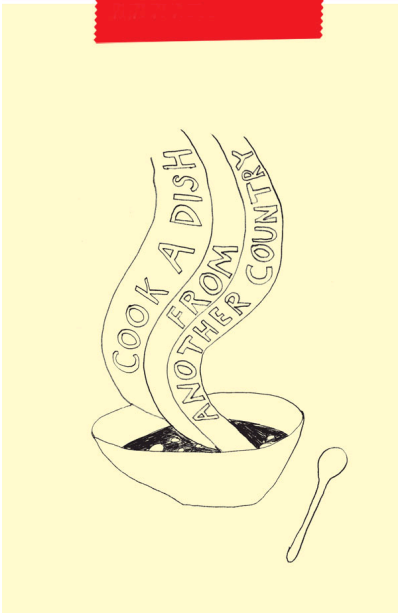
The Hassanzai family say

'We usually cook this dish with meat as no-one in Afghanistan is vegetarian, but this is an alternative for those who don't eat meat. We don't cook this dish everyday. We cook it on special occasions like Now Roz. In our calendar, the year is 1385 – we count this way in Afghanistan, Iran and some Kurdish countries. We count the year from the sun, not the moon. Mohammed went from Mecca to Medina 1385 years ago. Now Roz will be on 21 March this year and the year will be 1386.'

Now Roz is a very special day. It was banned by the Taliban as it is not an Islamic tradition. It dates back to the Aryan people who would celebrate the Spring. On that day we eat seven kinds of dried fruit and nuts, including pistachios, almonds and apricot seeds. We wash them seven times first and then soak them in water for 2-3 days before eating them. On Now Roz, we buy new clothes, clean the house and eat our special food.'

This delicious dish was taken from 'Home Cooking, a collection of international recipes by families from Newham' produced by the [Children's Society](#).

You can get hold of this book, along with loads of other recipes for tasty tea time treats on the '[Cook a dish from another country](#)' pages.



Qabuli Palow should look roughly like this when you're done...

The Hassanzai family
