

# Lentils, Rice, Caramelized Onions and a Dinner to Remember - Melissa Clark

From Melissa Clark's HOW TO COOK WITH PANTRY STAPLES series (during Coronavirus) - NYT article, March 30, 2020. I've included direct quotes from Melissa Clark (MC) in the directions.

**Cook Time** 1 hour 30 minutes

**Servings** 4 people

## Ingredients

- Olive Oil
- 2 White onions, peeled and sliced OR 1 large OR equivalent amount of shallots and/or leeks
- Kosher Salt and Black Pepper
- 4 Garlic Cloves, peeled and thinly sliced "A couple" of garlic cloves - so, to taste. I randomly decided on 4.
- 1 tsp Ground Cumin
- 1/4 tsp Allspice if you have it!
- 1 pinch Cayenne Pepper
- Herb Sprigs - thyme, oregano, rosemary A few sprigs, if you have. Otherwise a large pinch of dried herbs.
- 5 cups Broth or Water or a combination
- 1 cup Rinsed Lentils (any kind)
- 3/4 cup Rinsed Rice
- Juice - 1/2 or 1 lemon OR other acid like Vinegar or Sumac
- Red Pepper Flakes For garnish, if desired

## Instructions

Prepare

1. Slice onion and garlic and set aside.
2. Rinse lentils and rice and set aside.

Cook

1. Slick a 'medium saucepan' (I'd use large saute pan) with olive oil.
2. Once hot, add the sliced onions and a pinch of salt. Sauté until the onions turn golden brown, 15-25 minutes. MC: "Watch them carefully, especially toward the end of cooking. If they are cooking too quickly, turn down the heat. If they're not getting brown, crank it. Some dark brown strands mixed in with the golden ones are OK, but you don't want them to burn."  
Note on amount of onions and cook time: MC: "The browned onions are the best part of this dish, so you really can't overdo it, but just know that the more onions you add, the longer they will take to caramelize. I used two shallots and two small onions, because that's what I had, but in a perfect world, I'd use one giant white onion, thinly sliced."
3. When done, remove onions to separate plate. Add the sliced garlic to the hot pan. Sauté the garlic until fragrant—about 1 minute—then add ground cumin, allspice and a pinch of cayenne pepper. Stir for a few seconds then add herb sprigs or large pinch of dried herbs.
4. Add 5 cups of broth or water (or combination) and bring to a simmer.
5. Add enough olive oil and salt so it tastes good.
6. Add 1 cup of RINSED LENTILS (any kind) and let simmer, partly covered, until they are almost but not quite done. For GREEN or BROWN lentils, about 25-30 minutes. For RED lentils, about 15-20 minutes
7. Add 3/4 cup RINSED rice to the pot. Simmer until everything is very tender - about another 18-25 minutes.  
MG: "As it cooks, keep an eye on it. If the mixture looks too thick, cover the pot, or add more liquid. If it seems too thin and soupy, turn up the heat and boil off some of the liquid. The consistency is up to you."
8. Taste and add lots of salt, pepper and LEMON JUICE for brightness.
9. Top with the reserved golden onions and served in bowls, drizzed with olive oil and garnished with red pepper flakes, chopped fresh herbs (if you have) and flaky salt.  
MG: "Without the garnish, it's a drab-looking dish. But even unadorned, the earthy flavors of the lentils combined with those sweet golden onions will shine bright."

## **Recipe Notes**

NOTE - Depending on what kind of lentils you use and whether you are using a food processor or hand-slicing onions, this recipe looks like it takes 1 - 1.5 hours.

Original Melissa Clark article (with recipe in paragraph form) here:

[Lentils, Rice, Caramelized Onions and a Dinner to Remember.](#)

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