

## MY INSTANT POT BIRYANI

### FOR THE YOGHURT MARINADE

- 1 C (250 ml) plain yoghurt, buttermilk or amasi
- 2 Tbsp (30 ml) garlic and ginger paste
- 2 Tbsp (30 ml) biryani masala
- 1 Tbsp (15 ml) garam masala
- 1 tsp (5 ml) Kashmiri chilli powder or Pakco roasted masala
- ½ tsp (2.5 ml) turmeric
- 1 Tbsp (15 ml) ground cumin
- ½ tsp (2.5 ml) saffron threads
- 2 tsp (10 ml) salt
- 1 ripe tomato, skinned and grated
- 1 fresh green chilli, split lengthwise

### PREPARING THE MARINADE WITH THE MEAT

1. Dab the leg of lamb with paper towel to remove all the excess moisture. This allows the marinade to adhere to the lamb.
2. Mix all the marinade ingredients together in a bowl. Add the portions of meat and mix well. Cover with plastic wrap and set aside.

### FOR THE BIRYANI

- 700 g shoulder or leg of lamb portions, bone in
- ½ C (125 ml) canola or vegetable oil
- 3 potatoes, peeled and halved or quartered, patted dry with a kitchen towel
- 3 onions, thinly sliced
- 2 cardamom pods, slightly bruised
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 2 bay leaves
- 3½ C (875 ml) water
- 2 C (500 ml) basmati rice, rinsed until the water runs clear, drained
- ½ C (125 ml) brown lentils, cooked in
- 2 C (500 ml) water for 10 minutes, rinsed and drained, or canned lentils, rinsed and drained
- Salt to taste
- 50 g butter
- 4–6 hard-boiled eggs
- 10 strands saffron threads, soaked in
- 2 Tbsp (30 ml) warm water

### PREPARING THE BIRYANI

1. You won't need the lid of the Instant Pot during the first phase of the cooking process. Set the Instant Pot to the Sauté setting on high, which means you'll press sauté three times.
2. Add the oil and then, once the oil is warm, add the potatoes and fry until golden and crisp on the outside but not yet cooked on the inside. Remove with a slotted spoon and set aside in a bowl.
3. Add the onions and fry for 15–20 minutes or until the onions are golden. Remove half of the onions with a slotted spoon and set aside in a bowl.
4. Press cancel on the Instant Pot. Add the meat and yoghurt marinade, the cardamom, cinnamon and bay leaves, and ½ C (125 ml) water to the Instant Pot.
5. Move the vent to the Sealing Position. Select the pressure cook setting and cook on high pressure for 25 minutes.
6. Once done, allow the pressure to release naturally, i.e. wait for the pin to drop.
7. When the pressure is released, place the partially fried potatoes in between the meat, then add half the rinsed rice, ensuring that you spread out the rice to cover the meat and potatoes.
8. Cover the rice with a layer of brown lentils. At this stage I also sprinkle 1 tsp (5 ml) salt over the lentils.
9. Add the remaining rice and spread this out over the lentils.
10. Add the remaining 3 C (750 ml) water and secure the lid.
11. Move the vent up to Sealing Position. Push Meat/Stew on Medium Pressure and set the time to 7 minutes.
12. Once done, allow the pressure to release naturally, i.e. wait for the pin to drop.
13. When the pressure is released, dot the partially cooked biryani with cubes of butter, pushing it down into the rice, ever so gently. Do the same with the hard-boiled eggs. Pour the saffron strands and water over the rice and eggs.
14. Secure the lid of the Instant Pot again and move the vent up to Sealing Position. Allow the biryani to rest for about 20 minutes until the rice has puffed up.
15. To serve, I remove the inner pot of the Instant Pot and set it down on the kitchen table surface. Place a large serving platter or large bowl over the inner pot and upend it.
16. Allow it to stand like this for about 2 minutes, then gently lift the inner pot to expose the different layers of the biryani.
17. Remove any leftovers from the inner pot, add it to the rest of the biryani and serve with tomato and onion relish.