The 11 young women and men working with the Iraqi Student Project in Damascus 2010-2011 put together, in most cases with their parents’ help, recipes for some of their favorite Iraqi cooking. Students and parents also took most of the photographs. The preparation of this PDF was done by two of these students, Ali Tahseen Abdulsamea and Ziad Al-Shamsie. We hope you will discover some of Iraq’s fine tastes by using these pages.
Sumac Salad

Ingredients:

- 2 large cucumbers
- 1 large tomato
- 1/4 medium onion
- 1 tablespoon sumac
- Salt
- Olive oil

Directions:

1. Slice the cucumbers in half, length-wise. Slice these halves into semi-circles, each no more than 1-2 mm thick. Put the cucumbers in the salad bowl.
2. Cut the tomato into salad-size pieces, not too large and not too small. Add to the cucumber.
3. Slice the onion into long pieces and add to the tomato and cucumber.
4. Pour about 1 tablespoon of olive oil over the salad and add the sumac and salt to taste.
Chicken Soup with Rice

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup long-grain rice
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 well-chopped onion
- 3/4 kg of chicken wings (1½ pounds)
- 1/2 tablespoon turmeric
- 1/2 tablespoon cardamom
- 2 tablespoons salt or to taste
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 10 cups of water
- 1/2 cup red lentils, well washed

Directions:

1. Wash the rice well.
2. Place rice in a large bowl of cold water and soak for 2 hours, then drain it and set aside.
3. In a soup pot, heat the oil over medium heat.
4. Add the onion and cook. Stir it often until it becomes soft and translucent.
5. Add the chicken, turmeric, cardamom, salt, pepper and water.
6. Cover and bring to a boil.
7. Lower the heat and add the rice and lentils.
8. Simmer until the rice has softened and the soup has become thick and creamy, about 2 hours (skim off any foam that may rise to the surface and stir occasionally to make sure that the rice does not stick to the bottom of the pot).
9. When the soup is creamy, remove the chicken wings from the pot.
10. Discard the skin and bones, shred the meat, and return it to the pot.
11. Taste and adjust for seasonings.
Iraqi Shourba

Ingredients:

- 2 cups orange lentils
- 4 cups water
- 1/2 tablespoon salt or 1 chicken bouillon cube
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 tablespoon dry onion

Directions:

1. Wash lentils.
2. Fill pot with lentils and water, pepper and salt, onion.
3. Bring it to a rapid boil.
4. Cover it and reduce heat to simmer.
5. Cook 20-25 minutes until it becomes thick and yellow.
Lentil Soup

Ingredients:

2 cups of lentils
½ tablespoon of salt
½ tablespoon of black pepper
4 cups of water
1 ½ tablespoons of sunflower oil
1 palm-size onion

Directions:

1. Rinse the lentils with cold water.
2. Put the water in a pot to heat and the lentils.
3. Add the salt, black pepper and sunflower oil. Stir the ingredients.
4. Reduce heat, cover pot and let it simmer.
5. Fry the onions in a small amount of oil.
6. Once the lentils turn yellow, add the onion to the soup
7. Stir occasionally, a few seconds each time, for about 10 min.
8. Bon Appétit!
Jajeek (yogurt and cucumber)

**Ingredients:**
- Cucumber (2 cucumbers for each cup of yogurt)
- Yogurt
- Mint (dry mint preferred)
- Salt

**Directions:**
Cut the cucumbers into small pieces and mix it with the mint in the yogurt. Add a dash of salt. Bon Appétit!
Minced Rice and Meat Patties (Kubba)

Ingredients

- 300g lamb minced (something more than 1/2 pound)
- 1 onion, finely diced
- 2 tbspns parsley, finely chopped
- Sultana raisins as desired
- 2 tspns peas
- 1 tspn cumin
- 1 tspn turmeric
- 1 tspn ground dry black lemon (if available)
- 2 cups rice
- 2 saffron strands
- Handful fine breadcrumbs
- Oil for frying

Preparation

First make stuffing by frying minced lamb with onion. When the meat is cooked, add parsley, sultanas and peas, and spice with cumin and turmeric and a little ground lemon or lime powder. Once the cooking liquids have disappeared, season to taste. The mixture must be quite dry and fragrant.

Cook long-grain rice (preferably basmati) with saffron or turmeric until well done. Mash with a handful or two of breadcrumbs to achieve a soft paste. With a handful of rice mixture, form a flat disc, place a teaspoon or two of meat mixture in the centre and fold the rice paste over it. Deep fry in vegetable or olive oil until golden.
Okra Gravy

Ingredients:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dry ingredient</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Vegetable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salt (based on taste)</td>
<td>2 teaspoons oil</td>
<td>½ kilo okra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 cups of water</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 teaspoons tomato paste</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

How to make it:

- Put some oil in the pan.
- Put the okra in, fry it a little.
- Put the garlic in.
- Add water, let it boil.
- Add the tomato paste.
- Let it rest, stir occasionally.

P.S. Serve with rice.

Photos by Sarah AK Ahmed
Yabsa (White Beans)

**Ingredients**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Quantity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beans</td>
<td>250 gm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sliced tomatoes</td>
<td>250 gm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sliced onions</td>
<td>2 medium size onions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minced garlic</td>
<td>3 pieces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomato paste</td>
<td>1 tablespoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt and red pepper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Preparation**

1. Put the beans in water for 12 hours.
2. Take beans from the water, and put them in 1 litter of clean water on medium heat.
3. When it starts to boil, remove the white layer that will form on the surface.
4. Add all the other ingredients and then cover the mixture and lower the heat.
5. Leave it for two hours until it is completely cooked.

Yabsa is usually served with rice, salad, amba (slices of pickled mango), slices of tomatoes and onions, and let’s not forget the pickles.

*Photos by Muthanna Wadeea (my father)*
Biryani (Vegetarian)

Ingredients:

- 2 cups of rice
- Oil
- Tomatoes
- Onions
- Potato
- Green peas
- Spices (cinnamon, turmeric, cumin, ginger, black peppers)
- Vermicelli

Directions:

Wash the rice and let it soak in a bowl for 15 minutes.

Cut the tomatoes, potatoes and onions in small pieces and fry them in oil in a separate pan. Add peas.

Fry some vermicelli in a separate pan.

Put a large pot on the stove. Start the heat and add 3-4 tablespoons of oil.

Add the rice and pour boiling water to cover the rice.

Add 2 teaspoons of salt and and other biryani spices and mix them together in the pot.

Wait for the water to boil and then add the fried vermicelli, tomatoes, potatoes, onions and peas to the rice in the pot.

Reduce the heat and simmer for 20 minutes.

Then it’s ready to be served.
Biryani

**Ingredients:**

3 teacups rice

½ cup vermicelli

2 potatoes

1/4 kilo chopped meat

2 large chopped pieces chicken

1 medium can peas

1 small bag peanuts

1 small bag kishmish (dry grapes)

**Making:**

Start cooking meat and chicken before anything else. Then start cooking rice with vermicelli. While rice is cooking, cut the potatoes into small pieces. Then fry potatoes and peanuts (separately). After rice, meat and chicken are cooked, add all the other ingredients on top of the rice.

Note: Serving can be in two ways: to keep the ingredients on top of the rice without any mixing, or to mix the ingredients which is more generally common in Iraq.
CHELEFRY (STEW)

**The ingredients:**

- 3 potatoes
- 2 onions
- ½ pound lamb or beef
- 2 tomatoes
- Parsley
- Tomato sauce
- Salt, black pepper, curry and turmeric

**How to make it:**

Cut the onions, potatoes and tomatoes to small cubes.

Put oil in a skillet and heat. Wait 1 minute then add the onion and wait for two minutes and then add the meat which is already minced and wait for 10 minutes.

In a separate skillet fry the pieces of potatoes. Then put the potatoes in the previous skillet that has the meat and the onion.

Add the pieces of tomato, the spices and three tablespoons of water and a tablespoon of tomato sauce and the parsley.

Cook for 7 minutes. Good Luck!
Eggplant Tabsi

**Ingredients**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredient</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eggplants, sliced to medium pieces</td>
<td>1/2 kilo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sliced tomatoes</td>
<td>1/4 kilo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minced onions</td>
<td>2 big pieces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minced garlic</td>
<td>3 pieces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olive oil</td>
<td>3 tablespoons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicken soup</td>
<td>3 cups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt and/or black pepper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Preparation**

1. Spread the salt over the slices of the eggplant and leave them for an hour. Then squeeze the slices by hand so they will not absorb a lot of oil.
2. Fry the eggplants with some olive oil and dry them with drying paper.
3. Arrange the slices with the tomatoes in lines in a pot (as shown in the photo) and spread the garlic, the onion, the soup and the spices over them.
4. Cover the pot and simmer it for two hours until it’s completely cooked.

Eggplant Tabsi is usually served with rice, Iraqi bread, and/or salad.

Photos by Muthanna Wadeea (my father)
Iraqi Shish Kebab

Ingredients:

- 1 lb lamb or 1 lb beef, cubed
- 1 1/2 tablespoons vinegar
- 1 1/2 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 onion, coarsely chopped
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper

Directions:

1. Make a marinade by mixing the vinegar, olive oil, onion, salt and pepper.
2. Marinate the cubed meat in the marinade for at least 2 hours.
3. Put the meat on skewers and grill or broil for 7-10 minutes or until the meat is browned and cooked to your preference.
4. SUGGESTION: While meat is marinating also marinate large chunks of vegetables (tomatoes, onions, green peppers or eggplant) in sauce made of equal parts of olive oil and lemon juice with a dash of salt and pepper. Thread these vegetables onto skewers and grill alongside the meat.

http://www.food.com/recipe/iraqi-shish-kebab-234055#ixzz1QE3vFeGy
Kibbe Batata (Potato-Beef Casserole)

Ingredients

- ½ pound ground lamb or beef
- 1 onion, chopped
- ¼ cup parsley, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- Salt to taste
- ½ cup rice
- 4 potatoes, peeled and quartered
- ½ teaspoon turmeric
- 2 tablespoons butter
- Cinnamon (optional)

Procedure

1. Combine meat and onion in skillet. Cook and stir until meat is brown and crumbly.
2. Add parsley, garlic, and season with salt.
3. In a deep saucepan, cook rice with potatoes in water (enough to cover potatoes) until potatoes are tender (about 25 minutes).
5. Preheat oven to 350°F.
6. Spread half the potato mixture in a greased 13 x 9-inch baking pan.
7. Spread the meat filling over potato layer.
8. Top with remaining potato mixture.
9. Sprinkle with cinnamon (optional).
10. Dot with butter on top and bake for 30 to 40 minutes, or until golden.
11. Cut into squares to serve.
Sarah AK Ahmed

Makloba
(the name came from the action of flipping the food from the pan onto the tray)

Ingredients:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dry ingredients</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Vegetables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black pepper</td>
<td>Oil</td>
<td>2 eggplants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ginger</td>
<td>Tomato paste</td>
<td>2 garlic cloves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt</td>
<td>Vegetarian</td>
<td>2 green Peppers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turmeric</td>
<td>Boullion (optional)</td>
<td>2 onions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 cups of rice</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 potatoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other spices</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 tomatoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>preferred</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How to make this thing:

- Mix part of the dry ingredients together. The salt, the black pepper, the turmeric, the ginger and any other flavor liked.
- Slice up all the vegetables and fry them separately, after that sprinkle the mixed dry ingredients over them to spice it up.
- Cook the 5 cups of rice in water (add spoon of tomato paste, optional)
- When the rice is half done, move the rice toward the inner walls of the pan in order to make a middle space to put in the fried vegetables (1st green pepper, 2nd onion, 3rd potato, 4th eggplants, 5th tomato). The garlic can be sprinkled between the layers of vegetables.
- Add the rest of the rice with which you’ll cover the vegetables.
- Close the pan and let it rest for a while. (20 minutes maximum)

The trick that the name came from is that after it's done, one has to flip it into the serving dish so that it appears like a mountain. When we crack this mountain of rice, the ingredients will flow out of it.

Photos by Sarah AK Ahmed
**Tapsi** with potatoes

**Ingredients:**

- 4 potatoes
- 3 tomatoes
- 2 onions
- 3 large pieces chicken
- Tomato paste and oil
- Spices: Curry

**Making:**

Slice tomato and onion in thin circles. Then, slice the potatoes in thin semi-circles. In the meantime, chicken should be boiling in water on the stove. Prepare tomato sauce with the desired spices, but note that curry must be used in the sauce. Now, pour some oil in the medium size pan. Next, put onion first until it’s fried. Place tomatoes on top of onion. Place the first layer of potatoes. Then, put more tomatoes on top of it and add another layer of potatoes. The last layer is subject to personal preference. To finalize, place the boiled pieces of chicken on top of everything and then add the tomato sauce. Put the dish on low fire and taste the potatoes occasionally or stick a knife through a potato to know whether the dish is well done or needs more cooking.
TESHREEB LOBYA

**Description:** It is one of the main Iraqi dishes. Iraqi people love this kind of Teshreeb, which is soaked bread in the boiled water of red beans.

**Ingredients:**

Serves 2-3 people

- Red beans 1 cup (or a medium mug)
- Water 1 liter
- Salt 1 teaspoon
- Bread 2 pieces (Iraqi Bread recommended)
- Lemon 2 pieces
- Sunflower oil 3 tablespoon
- Egg 2 eggs

**Directions:**

1. Put a liter of tap water into a pot on the stove. Heat the water and wait until the water begins to boil.
2. Add a cup of red beans to it.
3. Cover the pot and leave it to simmer for 20-30 minutes.
4. Keep watching the level of water and you can add a half-cup of water to it.
5. Add a teaspoon of salt.
6. During this time put three tablespoons of sunflower oil in a skillet and wait for it to simmer.
7. Cut the bread into small pieces and put them in wide dish and pour out the pot over this dish and then add the simmered oil over it.
8. For extra addition: do two scrambled eggs and put them over the main dish.
9. Serve it hot with lemon.

Enjoy it!

*Photos by Ali Tahseen.*
Timmen Ahmar (Red Rice)

Ingredients:

2 cups of rice
3-4 tablespoons of oil
3 tablespoons tomato paste
onions, as many as desired
2-3 teaspoons salt

Directions:

Wash the rice and let it soak in a bowl for 15 minutes.
Cut the onions to small pieces.
Put the pot on the stove. Start the heat and pour 3-4 tablespoons oil.
Fry the onions in the pot.
While frying, add 3 tablespoons tomato paste.
Add the rice and pour boiling water over all until the water just covers everything in the pot.
Add 2-3 teaspoons of salt.
Wait for the water to boil, then decrease the fire.
Simmer for 20 minutes and then serve it!