

with the soya oil and mix with the spinach and flour. Season and form into small balls. Bring the soup to the boil—there should be at least 4 tins of fluid—add the balls, season and boil for 5 minutes. Serve very hot.

### VEGETABLES

Vegetables in an Iraqi house are almost always cooked with meat, although the quantity of the latter may be small. If they are to be eaten cold the fat used in the cooking is usually oil. Even rice, which is the oriental equivalent of the occidental potato, may have savoury or sweet fluids or solids added to it. In the orient the cooking of rice is an art whereby when served every grain remains separate and pasty balls are never seen. Were occidentals able to cook rice in such a way their enjoyment of it would be much greater, and no attempt should be made to try an oriental recipe containing rice until one or other of the methods of cooking rice has been mastered. Rice in an oriental house is bought in large quantities and when a new sack is opened the expert should not need to cook it more than twice or at most three times to know exactly how much fater is required and how long it will take to cook, and the information once acquired holds until a new sack is bought. As occidentals usually buy rice a kilo or two at a time it is not surprising that so frequently they fail to cook it successfully. The rice available in Britain which is most nearly equivalent to the oriental unpolished rice is Patna rice which should be used for curries and savoury dishes. Carolina rice is polished and is only suitable for puddings and certain Creole dishes.

Although it has been pointed out that Europeans are not adept at cooking rice, the lamentable fact remains that the same may be said of oriental attempts to cook potatoes, for which care and skill are required if they are not to come to the table looking like discoloured pieces of soap. Potatoes were first introduced into Persia by Sir John Malcolm about the middle of last century and became known as "Malcolm's plums". In the last ten years they have been much more used by the oriental than formerly but the art of bringing a steaming floury potato to the table is rare among oriental cooks. It is hoped the following recipes for rice & potatoes will be helpful, for with out the former a successful oriental meal can not be served, and without the latter an occidental one will be a corresponding failure.

Many delicious vegetables are grown in and about Baghdad and the occidental who complains that they are flavourless will often find that this is due to his cook's unsuccessful attempts to prepare them in an occidental way, the boiling of vegetables to satisfy the European plate usually resulting in the extraction of all flavour. Vegetables, like meat, should be put into boiling water in order to prevent the escape of the tasty juices. In oriental dishes the flavour of the vegetables is retained since the fluid in which they are cooked is never thrown away.

Many tropical diseases are due to the eating of contaminated raw vegetables. In a vast plain all irrigation of gardens must be done with water

pumped from an adjoining river and transported through canals to the vegetable beds which the channeled with irrigation ditaches. The water carries an abundance of rich loam which is deposited over the country and contributes to its fertility. It also, however, carries among other things innumerable snails which harbour the organisms of schistosomiasis, and which may be found washed up in large numbers to the closed end of a ditch after the water has seeped away. Similarly the cysts of amoebae which cause dysentery and of other infections are transmitted to the susceptible human being by means of vegetables contaminated with this water. Blind faith in the efficacy of disinfectants such as potassium permanganate is unwise, for although, if used in sufficient strength, it may be lethal for bacteria such as those causing typhoid fever and bacillary dysentery, it is completely useless for more resistant organisms, since the solution used is generally too weak and the time of exposure to it too short to be of any use. For those who care to eat raw vegetables, mechanical washing under a good stream of pure water is of more value than a poor and highly dilute disinfectant.

Lettuce in Iraq grows to an enormous size in long crisp heads, but this result is only achieved by the use of manure which is highly dangerous to human life, and newcomers to the country who have but little immunity to local diseases should consider seriously before eating the tempting green leaves. Boiling, or heating to a high temperature by other means, is the simplest household method of killing most of the dangerous microorganisms, and fruit and vegetables such as strawberries and tomatoes which come into close contact with the ground are much safer and not greatly spoiled by dipping for a few moments into scalding water.

In the bazaar vegetables and fruits are to be found in abundance. They are arranged in tempting piles and as the owner of the shop reaches for a distant vegetable he supports himself by swinging on a heavy brass chain worn smooth and shiny with many years of use.

### 319. Aubergine à la Provincale.

Egg plants	Flour
Sweet peppers	Salt and pepper
Tomatoes	Sugar
Frying oil	Tomato juice

Slice and fry the egg plants. Slice the peppers and remove the seeds and arrange in alternate rows with the egg plants. Cover with sliced, fried tomatoes. Make a sauce with the oil in which the tomatoes were fried, and the remaining ingredients. Fill up the dish and bake for half an hour. Best eaten cold.

### 320. Baked Cucumber.

4 large cucumbers	$\frac{1}{2}$ tin cream
tin white cream cheese or lebné	1 tbs. finely minced parsley
$1\frac{1}{2}$ tins bread crumbs	Salt and pepper

Pare the cucumbers, cut in half lengthwise and scoop out the seeds. Fill the cavities with a mixture made of the remaining ingredients. Place in a greased fireproof dish and bake till tender. Serve with tomato or mustard sauce.

**321. Baked Savoury Cabbage (Italian).**

1	small cabbage	Dry, sifted bread crumbs
$\frac{1}{2}$	tin white sauce	Salt and pepper
2	tbsp. grated cheese	Butter

Boil the cabbage until tender, then chop it coarsely. Place a layer at the bottom of a greased pie dish and cover with white sauce. Sprinkle liberally with cheese and season highly with salt and pepper. Repeat until the dish is full. Cover the top with a thin layer of bread crumbs and a few pieces of butter. Bake in a moderate oven for about half an hour.

**322. Bubble and Squeak.**

$1\frac{1}{2}$	tins cold boiled cabbage	Salt and pepper
1—2	tbsp. finely chopped raw onion	Frying fat
3	tins cold boiled potatoes chopped	

Chop the cabbage, mix with the onion and potatoes. Season and fry till nicely browned on both sides. When ready turn out and serve with pickles.

**323. Boiled Potatoes.**

Wash the potatoes well and pare off the skin. Put in a pan and just cover with cold water. To each 4 tins of water add a tablespoonful of salt. Boil the potatoes quickly for about 20 minutes or until almost cooked. Drain off the water, cover tightly and continue to cook in their own steam for a few minutes. Draw to the side of the fire, open the lid slightly to allow the steam to escape and continue to dry them for another few minutes, shaking from time to time so that they do not stick. They are ready when the surface of the potatoes looks white and rather powdery.

**324. Carrots à la Vichy.**

$\frac{1}{2}$	k. carrots	Salt
2	tbsp. butter	Sugar

Clean and mince the carrots, put into boiling water with the butter and a little salt and sugar and cook very quickly till the water has evaporated. Leave them on the fire just long enough to turn brown.

**325. Cauliflower Fritters (French).**

1	large cauliflower	1	tsp. olive oil
1	tbsp. salt	4	tbsp. flour
4	tins water	$\frac{1}{2}$	tin parsley
2	tbsp. butter	$\frac{1}{4}$	tin vinegar
1	white of egg		Salt and pepper

Trim and clean the cauliflower and half boil it in the 4 tins of water to which a tablespoonful of salt has been added. Meanwhile melt the butter in a little hot water and stir in the flour, oil and salt, making a batter which will run from the spoon. Mix lightly with the white of egg well beaten. Drain the cauliflower thoroughly and divide it into branches and shake them well in vinegar. Season with salt and pepper, dip, them in the batter and fry in deep fat, taking care that they do not stick together.

**326. Chinese Cabbage.**

1 small cabbage	2 tbsp. wine
Salt	2 tsp. sugar
2 tbsp. soya oil or $\frac{1}{4}$ cube oxo	Vegetable oil
2 tbsp. water	

Chop the cabbage into small dice, sprinkle with the seasonings and fry in smoking hot oil. Stir for 5—10 minutes and serve half cooked and crisp.

Many vegetables may be cooked in this way. If spinach is used it should not be chopped and the wine and sugar should be omitted.

**327. Creamed Peppers and Cabbage.**

1 small cabbage	3 tbsp. flour
6 green sweet peppers	3 tins milk
3 tbsp. butter	2 tsp. salt
	$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. pepper

Shred the cabbage and cook till tender in boiling, salted water. Put the peppers directly over slow heat and toast them, turning often, or they may be held on a fork over a free flame. Scrape off the blistered skin, holding the peppers under cold water. Cut in long strips, after removing the seeds. Blend the butter, flour and milk, heat in a pan and cook the peppers in it till tender. Add the cabbage and seasonings. Mix well and when thoroughly heated serve at once.

**328. Egg Plant with Cheese.**

4 medium egg plants	Salt and pepper
Frying oil	$\frac{1}{2}$ tin grated cheese
1 tin tomato purée	Bread crumbs

Slice the egg plants and fry in oil. Arrange in a greased, fireproof dish, moisten with the tomato purée seasoned with pepper and salt, sprinkle over the grated cheese, then the breadcrumbs and grill, or put in a hot oven, for fifteen minutes.

**329. Fistugia - Broad Beans with Leban.**

$\frac{1}{2}$ k. broad beans	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ tins leban
2 tsp. rice	1 small egg
Salt	2 cloves garlic

Clean and shell the beans and boil till tender. Drain. Add the well boiled rice. Season. Mix the egg and crushed garlic with the leban, add to

the beans and leave on a slow fire for 10 minutes. Serve hot or cold.

**330. French Fried Potatoes.**

These are done in the same way as potato chips but are cut lengthwise into fingers, each potato making about 8 pieces.

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|------------------------------|------------------|
| 3 tins rice                  | 1 tin sugar      |
| Salt                         | 2—3 tbsp. butter |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ k. fresh fruit |                  |

Soak the rice in lukewarm salted water for 24 hours.

Stew the fruit with the sugar—cherries make a delicious pilau—until it is tender. Thicken the syrup further if necessary.

Drain the rice and put into boiling water for 20—30 minutes till quite soft. Drain very thoroughly. Melt the butter in a pan and put in a layer of rice, then fruit, and so on alternately till all is used up. Cover the pan with a well fitting lid and for the most satisfactory results keep a charcoal fire glowing both below the pan and on the lid of the pan for about an hour. Turn out when ready.

Fruit with stones should have them removed after stewing.

**332. Fried Carrots.**

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|--------------------------|--------------------|
| $\frac{1}{2}$ k. carrots | Sifted breadcrumbs |
| Beaten egg               | Salt and pepper    |
|                          | Fat                |

Boil the carrots, slice thinly, dip in seasoned egg and breadcrumbs and fry.

**333. Imam Bayildi.**

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|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 8 small egg plants            | $\frac{1}{4}$ tin chopped parsley |
| 2 large onions                | Salt and pepper                   |
| 1 small head of garlic-cruhed | $\frac{3}{4}$ tin olive oil       |
| 4 medium tomatoes             |                                   |

Cut four strips of skin lengthwise from the egg plants, at equal distances from each other. Then make two cuts down the egg plant dividing each into three pieces but leaving them attached for about an inch at the one end Chop the remaining vegetables finely, season and stuff the mixture into the cuts in the egg plants. Lay them horizontally in a pan so that the stuffing cannot fall out, cover with water and cook till half done—about an hour. Add the olive oil—sometimes this is added with the water at the beginning of cooking—and cook till the water has evaporated. Remove to a serving dish and serve cold.

**334. Khankar Bakmadi.**

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|---------------------|------------------------|
| 8 medium egg plants | 1 tbsp. flour          |
| 2 tbsp. butter      | $\frac{1}{2}$ tin milk |
|                     | Salt and pepper        |

Grill the egg plants, skin them and remove the seeds. Beat thoroughly until a smooth purée is formed. Add the butter and flour and continue beating. Mix in the milk, bring to the boil and serve.

**335. Lyonnaise Potatoes.**

Cook a small minced onion in hot fat. Add sliced cooked potatoes, a little more fat, if necessary, and salt and pepper. Cook till well browned, turning occasionally. Serve with minced parsley.

**336. Marinaded Aubergine.**

4 large egg plants	Olive oil
Salt and pepper	Herbs

Cut the egg plants in two, remove the seeds and marinade for half an hour in a mixture of salt, pepper olive oil and chopped herbs. Drain and grill over an open fire, brushing from time to time with the oil mixture used for marinading.

**337. Mashed Potatoes.**

4 large potatoes	4 tbsp. milk
4 tsp. butter	Pepper and salt

Boil, drain and mash the potatoes until no lumps are left. Heat the butter and milk until boiling, add the potatoes, season and beat vigorously with a masher or fork until light and fluffy. Serve very hot.

**338. Mixed Green Vegetables.**

1 small onion	4-8 spring onions
$\frac{1}{2}$ tin butter	3 small young turnips
1 small cauliflower	3-4 tomatoes
$\frac{1}{2}$ small cabbage	Salt
2 tbsp. chopped parsley	$\frac{1}{4}$ tin vinegar

Chop the onion and brown in the butter. Prepare the vegetables, chop roughly and add to the onion with some salt and a little water. Cook for 20 minutes, add the vinegar, stir well and serve.

**339. Mujadara.**

2 tin lentils with skins on	2 large onions
1 tin rice	$\frac{1}{2}$ tin olive oil or frying fat
Salt	

Clean the lentils thoroughly and boil until soft in a large volume of water. Drain off the fluid and retain it. Add the rice which should previously have been drained, washed and soaked, and mix with the lentils; then add enough of the water in which the lentils were boiled just to cover the mixture of rice and lentils. Season to taste and cook over a low fire till the rice is ready. Meanwhile slice the onions finely and fry. When ready dish the mixture, pour the fat over it and decorate with the browned onions.