

Orange Blossom Water

<http://www.orangeblossomwater.net>

<http://www.orangeblossomwater.net/index.php/2010/04/02/mehshi-al-bathenjan-and-mehshi-al-kousa/>

Mehshi Al-Bathenjan and Mehshi Al-Kousa

From: Family Recipe / Servings: 10 People

31 long and thin eggplants,
each approximately 3.5 - 4.5 inches
(8.9 - 11.4 cm) long

You can see in the picture long and thin eggplants choose long eggplants that each approximately 3.5 - 4.5 inches (8.9 - 11.4 cm) long, then rinse eggplants with water and drain.

35 vegetable marrows
each approximately 3 - 3.5 inches
(7.6 - 8.9 cm) long

Remove the hat of the eggplants.

Filling

Cut off the stem of the eggplants as you see in the picture.

150 g fat free lamb meat

Cut a small piece from the top of the eggplants to have a diameter of the top part of the eggplant equal to 3/4 - 1 inch (1.9 - 2.5 cm).

200 g sheep/lamb tail fat "Liyeh"

1000 g Egyptian short grain rice

Hollow eggplants from one end with the squash corer leaving about 1/16 inch (0.06 cm) thick shell all around, and be careful to leave one end of eggplant intact, if you don't have squash corer try to use apple corer.

Boiling water, for soaking rice

1 tbsp + 2 tsp salt

1 1/4 tsp black pepper

This is the final result.

3 tbsp tomato paste

Set aside.

For Soaking Vegetables

Water

You can see in the picture vegetable marrows (marrow squash), choose vegetable marrows that each approximately 3 - 3.5 inches (7.6 - 8.9 cm) long, then rinse vegetable marrows with water and drain.

Crushed garlic

Dried mint

Cut off the stem of the vegetable marrows as you see in the picture.

Use a knife to remove the round caps at the ends of

Salt

the vegetable marrows as you see in the picture.

Tomato Sauce

2 L water

Hollow vegetable marrows from one end with the squash corer leaving about 1/12 inch (0.08 cm) thick shell all around , and be careful to leave one end of vegetable marrow intact, if you don't have squash corer try to use apple corer.

1 1/4 cup tomato paste

Salt - if needed

This is the final result.

Set aside.

Filling

In the bowl, you can see fat free lamb meat, Sheep/Lamb tail fat, in Syria the sheep/lamb tail fat is called "Liyeh".

Prepare meat grinder, attach the fine holed plate.

Grind the meat and the liyeh together, and set aside.

This is Egyptian rice.

Rinse rice with cold water in several changes.

Bring water to boil.

Soak rice in boiled water for 10 minutes, then drain and rinse with cold water in several changes

To rice, add the mixture of ground meat and liyeh.

Add salt and black pepper, don't add salt directly to rice, but add it directly to the mixture of meat and liyeh.

Add tomato paste.

Mix until combine, and set aside in the refrigerator.

For Soaking Vegetables

In a bowl, add water, crushed garlic, dried mint and salt.

Soak eggplants in this water for 10 minutes.

After 10 minutes, shake eggplants and get rid of excess water from the inside of the eggplant, then set aside.

After you finish from the eggplants, do the same with vegetable marrow, soak in the water for 10 minutes.

After 10 minutes, shake vegetable marrows to rid of excess water from the inside of the vegetable marrows, then set aside.

After you finish all the eggplants and vegetable marrows, keep the water in the bowl and don't discard it, we will use this water later. They are ready to be stuffed.

Stuff eggplants with the filling fully to brim.

After that, press the eggplant slightly using your thumb and index and run your fingers from bottom up to top to remove excess rice.

Excess rice return them to the bowl of the filling.

Set aside.

Stuff vegetable marrows with the filling to the half of the vegetable marrow only, and press inside the vegetable marrow using your finger, for example if the vegetable marrow is 3.1 inch (8 cm) long, so you fill up to 1.55 inch (4 cm).

You can notice from the picture how they are filled.

Set aside.

The water (water, crushed garlic, dried mint and salt) that was used to soak the vegetables, now we need it, strain.

Keep the water and set aside.

Tomato Sauce

To prepare tomato sauce, in a pot, put water and tomato paste.

Heat the tomato sauce, don't boil.

Meanwhile, prepare a large deep pot, and arrange tablespoons on the bottom of the pot (it doesn't matter how they are arranged, try any way you are comfortable with, also 6 tablespoons were good for the size of my pot).

Add the flat pot lid over the tablespoons (I used the large pot lid because the size is perfect for my pot). The tablespoons and the pot lid work as a protection for the stuffed vegetables; to prevent the direct contact between the stuffed vegetable and the heat.

Arrange the eggplants first, in the same way as you see in the picture

Arrange the vegetable marrows over the eggplants, in the same way as you see in the picture.

Put a plate over the stuffed vegetable marrows.

Add 500 ml of the water that was saved in steps 71, 72.

Add hot tomato sauce.

Add a heavy thing over the plate, sometimes I use a piece of marble, but here I used a pot filled with water, (actually there is a special tool to be used for mehshi, but mine is broken).

Keep on high heat until it starts to boil.

Once the sauce is boiling vigorously, remove the heavy thing but keep the plate.

Lower the heat, and taste if you need salt so you can add salt, cover the pot and cook for 2 hours.

After 2 hours, time to serve, I use “pot strainer” to help me to pour out the sauce through the strainer, save the sauce to serve with mehshi.

Transfer mehshi to a plate one by one, keep with you a bowl with cold water, wet your hand then each time take mehshi and transfer to a plate, cold water helps you to handle the hot mehshi.

After you finish from vegetable marrows, do the same thing with the eggplants.

Serve hot with tomato sauce and Arabic flat bread.

Notes and Tips

Some people like to make the mixture of meat and liyeh coarser, but in my family we like them very fine.

Some people substitute sheep/lamb tail fat “Liyeh” with oil or ghee or butter, actually that will not be a traditional mehshi, and the taste is not great at all, liyeh gives mehshi the unique taste.

Some people don't soak the vegetables in the mixture of (water, crushed garlic, dried mint, and salt), but soaking them gives a unique flavor.

In Syria, we don't add cinnamon, cloves, all spice or any spice to any kind of dish except in few case and that's when the recipe specify the spices such as in [Ozee](#), so please don't add any spices if my recipe didn't tell you to add, otherwise you will not get the traditional taste. Mehshi doesn't need any spices, and that's very clear in the recipe.