

# Orange Blossom Water

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## Mnazzalet Al-Bathenjan

From: Family Recipe / Servings: 5 - 6 People

23 eggplants,  
each approximately 3.5 - 4.5 inches  
(8.9 - 11.4 cm) long  
and approximately 1.6 inch (4 cm)  
diameter circle between the middle  
and the bottom of the eggplant

Vegetable ghee, for frying eggplants

1 medium red onion, finely chopped

1 cup finely chopped flat parsley

leaves

1/3 cup pine nuts

1 tbsp ghee, for pine nuts

1 tbsp ghee, for meat

500 g fat free ground lamb meat

3 kg red tomatoes

Salt

Black pepper

### Rice

2 tbsp ghee

3 cups Egyptian short grain rice

You can see in the picture the type of eggplants used, this type is called "Tartossi Bathenjan" it comes from [Tartus](#) in Syria, choose eggplants that are similar to the eggplants in the picture each approximately 3.5 - 4.5 inches (8.9 - 11.4 cm) long and approximately 1.6 inch (4 cm) diameter circle between the middle and the bottom of the eggplant

, then rinse eggplants with water and drain.

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

Remove the hat of the eggplants.

Cut a small piece from the top of the eggplant.

Peel the eggplants.

Rinse peeled eggplants in several changes with water.

Season eggplants with salt.

Heat vegetable ghee, and deep fry eggplants until golden brown in color.

Put fried eggplants on a plate lined with paper towels and change the towels every once in a while, and set aside.

Finely chop onion, and set aside.

Finely chop parsley leaves, and set aside.

Prepare pine nuts. Heat 1 tbsp ghee, and add pine nuts until golden brown in color, then remove and

Boiling water, for soaking rice

drain on paper towel, and set aside.

4 1/2 cups water

Heat 1 tbsp ghee.

Salt

Add ground meat.

### Garnish

Once the meat is cooked, add chopped onion.

Chopped parsley leaves

Add finely chopped parsley, add salt and black pepper (Note the meat should be completely cooked before adding parsley, when you cook meat, there's water comes from the meat, but this water during cooking evaporates, so once this happen and the meat is completely cooked and no water remains you can add parsley).

Fried pine nuts

Add pine nuts to meat, stir for few seconds and turn off heat.

Now, time to stuff the eggplants.

Create a vertical opening in the middle of the eggplant.

Stuff eggplants with meat.

Close the opening.

Set the stuffed eggplants aside.

Bring red tomatoes.

Peel tomatoes completely, do not use the method of boiling tomatoes then peel them, it is very easy to bring a knife and peel tomatoes without boiling them. Do not discard tomato skins.

Cut peeled tomatoes into half.

Remove seeds, and do not discard the seeds.

Cut tomatoes into chunks, and set aside.

These are the tomato skins and seeds, put them in a deep pot, and add salt to them.

Bring them to boil on medium heat for 30 minutes.

After 30 minutes, strain.

After straining, save the liquid, and discard the skins and seeds.

Bring a deep baking oven dish (my dish capacity is 5.5 qt = 5 L), add the tomato chunks.

Pour the liquid that you saved over the tomato chunks, and add salt, and place the dish on the bottom rack of the oven on 518 °F (270 °C) for 30 minutes, but make sure that after the first 15 minutes to turn off the upper burner of the oven.

After 30 minutes in the oven, remove baking dish from oven, and add the stuffed eggplants on the surface of the tomato chunks. Reduce the heat into 431 °F (220 °C), then return the baking dish to the oven on the bottom rack of the oven and keep for 30 minutes.

## Rice

Melt 2 tbsp ghee and bring it to high heat, then turn off heat.

Rinse rice with cold water in several changes.

Bring water to boil.

Soak rice in boiled water for 10 minutes.

To ghee, add 4 1/2 cup water, and add salt, then turn on heat and let it boil.

Drain rice, then rinse it with cold water in several changes.

Once the water is boiling vigorously add rice.

Check if the water is good for the rice by this method which is called “Al-Samda” (Read more about Al-Samda in the post [Maqloubat Al-Bathenjan](#)), and keep the rice for 5 minutes over

high heat so it will boil vigorously, then lower heat and cover pot and keep for 15 – 20 minutes till rice is cooked, when it is completely cooked, turn off heat, stir and serve.

Garnish Mnazzalet Al-Bathenjan with chopped parsley leaves and fried pine nuts, serve with rice.