

Spice-Rubbed Steaks & Basmati Rice

with Summer Squash, Figs, & Garlic Labneh Sauce

TIME: 40-50 minutes

SERVINGS: 4

Tonight's vibrant steak dinner is inspired by a challenge-winning dish from the September 13 episode of MasterChef Season 8 on FOX. We're searing our steaks with a complex blend of spices—including herby za'atar, citrusy cardamom, and sweet, aromatic allspice—for deeply browned exteriors. Fluffy basmati rice studded with figs and almonds adds contrasting pops of texture to the dish, completed by tender squash and sweet peppers.



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Ingredients



4
STEAKS



1 cup
WHITE BASMATI
RICE



2 cloves
GARLIC



4 oz
SWEET PEPPERS



2 Tbsps
ROASTED
ALMONDS



1 ½ Tbsps
STEAK SPICE
BLEND*



1
LEMON



1
SUMMER SQUASH



1 large bunch
CILANTRO & MINT



¼ cup
LABNEH CHEESE



1 oz
DRIED TURKISH
FIGS

* Za'atar, Ground Allspice, Ground Coriander, Ground Cardamom, Ground Cumin, & Garlic Powder



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1 Cook the rice:

- ☐ Peel **1 garlic clove**. In a small pot, combine the whole garlic clove, **rice**, a **big pinch of salt**, and **2 cups of water**; heat to boiling on high.
- ☐ Once boiling, cover and reduce the heat to low. Cook 14 to 16 minutes, or until the water has been absorbed and the rice is tender. Turn off the heat; fluff the cooked rice with a fork. Set aside in a warm place.

2 Prepare the ingredients & make the garlic labneh sauce:

- ☐ While the rice cooks, wash and dry the fresh produce.
- ☐ Halve the squash lengthwise; cut crosswise into $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch-thick pieces.
- ☐ Cut off and discard the pepper stems. Halve the peppers lengthwise, then remove and discard the ribs and seeds. Thinly slice crosswise.
- ☐ Quarter and deseed the lemon.
- ☐ Roughly chop the figs; place in a bowl with $\frac{1}{4}$ **cup of warm water** to rehydrate.
- ☐ Roughly chop the almonds.
- ☐ Roughly chop the cilantro leaves and stems.
- ☐ Pick the mint leaves off the stems; discard the stems, then roughly chop.
- ☐ Peel and finely chop the remaining garlic clove; using the flat side of your knife, smash until it resembles a paste (or use a zester).
- ☐ In a bowl, combine the **labneh**, **mint**, **1½ tablespoons of water**, a drizzle of olive oil, and **as much of the garlic paste as you'd like**; season with salt and pepper to taste.



3 Cook the steaks:

- ☐ Pat the **steaks** dry with paper towels. Season with salt, pepper, and the **spice blend** on both sides. In a large pan, heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil on medium-high until hot. Add the seasoned steaks and cook 4 to 6 minutes per side for medium-rare, or until browned and cooked to your desired degree of doneness.
- ☐ Leaving any browned bits (or fond) in the pan, transfer to a cutting board and let rest for at least 5 minutes.



4 Cook the vegetables:

- ☐ While the steaks rest, add 1 tablespoon of olive oil to the pan of reserved fond; heat on medium-high until hot. Add the **squash**; cook, without stirring, 2 to 3 minutes, or until lightly browned and slightly softened. Add the **peppers**; season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, 2 to 3 minutes, or until softened.
- ☐ Turn off the heat; stir in **the juice of 1 lemon wedge**. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

5 Finish the rice:

- ☐ While the vegetables cook, to the pot of **cooked rice**, add the **rehydrated figs** (draining before adding), **almonds**, **the juice of the remaining lemon wedges**, and a drizzle of olive oil. Stir to combine; season with salt and pepper to taste.

6 Slice the steaks & serve your dish:

- ☐ Find the lines of muscle (or grain) on the **rested steaks**; thinly slice crosswise against the grain.
- ☐ Divide the **finished rice**, **cooked vegetables**, and sliced steaks among 4 dishes. Garnish with the **cilantro**. Serve with the **garlic labneh sauce** on the side. Enjoy!

