

Black and Brown Rice Stuffing with Walnuts and Pears

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Pears and walnuts complement dark black and pale brown rice in this sweet and savory mixture. Make sure you don't overcook the pears; they need only a quick sear in the pan. The optional red lentils or cranberries add some color to the mix.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 1/2 cups black rice (Forbidden Rice/Lundberg Black Japonica)
- 1/2 cup brown rice
- 1 quart water, chicken stock or vegetable stock
- Salt to taste
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 1 small or medium onion, finely chopped
- 1 cup diced celery
- 2 garlic cloves, minced (optional)
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 3 ripe but firm pears, peeled, cored and cut in 1/2-inch dice
- 1/2 cup lightly toasted walnuts, coarsely chopped
- 1/4 cup red lentils, soaked in cold water to cover for 2 or 3 hours and drained, or 1/4 cup dried cranberries
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped sage
- 2 teaspoons fresh thyme leaves, roughly chopped
- Freshly ground pepper



1. Cook the black and brown rices separately in 2 parts water or stock with salt to taste, following the directions on the package for timing (brown rice should take 35 to 40 minutes). When the rice is tender, turn off the heat, place clean kitchen towels between the saucepans and their lids, and let sit for 10 to 15 minutes. Transfer to a large bowl.

2. While the rice is cooking, prepare the remaining ingredients. Heat the oil over medium heat in a large, heavy skillet and add the onion. Cook, stirring often, until the onion begins to soften, about 3 minutes. Add the celery and a generous pinch of salt, and continue to cook until the onion is completely tender, another 3 to 4 minutes. Stir in the garlic and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 30 to 60 seconds. Remove from the heat and add to the bowl with the rice.

3. Return the skillet to medium-high heat and add the butter. When the foam subsides, add the pears and cook, tossing in the pan or stirring, until lightly seared and translucent, about 3 minutes. Remove from the heat and add to the rice. Add the remaining ingredients, including the soaked red lentils or dried cranberries if desired, and gently toss together. Taste and adjust seasonings. Transfer to a lightly oiled or buttered baking dish and cover with foil.

4. Warm the stuffing in a 325-degree oven for 20 to 30 minutes before serving.

Yield: Makes about 7 cups, serving 12 to 14

Advance preparation: The cooked grains will keep for 3 days in the refrigerator and can be frozen. The stuffing benefits from being made a day ahead.

Nutritional information per serving (12 servings): 211 calories; 1 gram saturated fat; 3 grams polyunsaturated fat; 2 grams monounsaturated fat; 3 milligrams cholesterol; 37 grams carbohydrates; 5 grams dietary fiber; 21 milligrams sodium (does not include salt to taste); 5 grams protein.