



Indian Lemon Rice

serves 6

On the final day of my travels in Rajasthan, my guide Vaibhav took me to the home of his family friend, Sunny, in Udaipur. After sipping tea and listening to family stories, Sunny asked me if I would help her and her sister prepare dinner. Although I was tired after many days of travel, I agreed to assist them, so we set about chopping onions and toasting spices for the meal they had planned. While a pot of laal maas simmered on the stove, we made rice with lemons they had picked from a nearby orchard. Every ingredient enhanced the floral flavors of the basmati rice, including the splash of mustard oil, which has become a staple in my Indian cooking. It was the last dish I learned to prepare in India, and it is definitely one of my favorites. At home I made it for my Indian friend Ravi, who told me it was tastier than any rice his mother had made while he was growing up. I can't think of a better compliment.

INGREDIENTS

2 tablespoon vegetable oil or mustard oil	2 teaspoon turmeric
1 yellow onion, sliced in half-moon shapes	2 cups basmati rice
1 cloves garlic, minced	4 cups water
1 tablespoon black mustard seed	4 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
1 teaspoon cumin seeds	2 tablespoon chives, chopped

PROCESS:

In a 2-quart pan, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add onion slices and stir until just soft. Add garlic, black mustard seed, cumin seeds, and turmeric. Cook until mustard seeds start to pop and crackle. Add rice and stir to coat with the oil and spices. Add water and 1 teaspoon of salt. Let come to a boil and then turn down heat to low, cover partially with a lid and cook for 15 minutes. Do not stir. After 15 minutes, remove from heat and cover completely with lid. Let sit for 10 minutes, then stir in lemon juice and taste to see if more salt is needed. Top with chopped chives and serve.