RECIPE

Brown rice and herb stuffed grape leaves

A snack of grape leaves rolled around brown rice, parsley, scallion and walnuts, simmered in lemon and olive oil, with about 350 mg sodium in a serving of three and no salt added beyond the leaves.

MAKES

6 servings US Metric

TOTAL

2 h 30 min

Ingredients

- [ ] ⅓ cup long-grain brown rice, dry
- [ ] 18 jarred grape leaves, rinsed and drained
- [ ] ½ cup chopped flat-leaf parsley
- [ ] ½ cup chopped scallions
- [ ] ¼ cup dill sprigs, chopped
- [ ] 1 tbsp chopped fresh mint
- [ ] 2 tbsp chopped walnuts
- [ ] 1 tsp grated lemon zest
- [ ] 5 tbsp lemon juice, divided (2 tbsp for the filling, 3 tbsp for the pot; 76.3 g)
- [ ] 3 tbsp olive oil, divided (1 tbsp for the filling, 2 tbsp for the pot; 40.5 g)
- [ ] ½ tsp black pepper
- [ ] 1 cup water, to cook the rice
- [ ] 1 ½ cups water, for the pot

Method

1. Bring 1 cup water to a boil in a small pot, stir in the brown rice, cover and turn the heat to low. At 5,300 ft the grain takes about a quarter longer (our kitchen practice: we extend CSU Extension's meat rule to this simmer), so give it 55 minutes, until the rice is tender and the water is gone. Spread it on a plate to cool for 15 minutes. It comes to about 1 cup.

2. Put the grape leaves in a bowl, cover them with hot tap water and let them sit 10 minutes. Drain, then rinse each leaf under cold water. This washes off the brine on the surface. The salt that has soaked into the leaf stays, and the card counts all of it.

3. In a bowl, stir the cooled rice with the parsley, scallions, dill, mint, walnuts, lemon zest, pepper, 1 tbsp of the olive oil and 2 tbsp of the lemon juice. Nothing here is salted; the leaves carry the salt. It should taste bright and green.

4. Lay a leaf shiny side down, stem end toward you, and snip off the stem. Put a heaping tablespoon of filling (about 16 g) near the stem end. Fold the stem end over it, fold in both sides, then roll up firmly but not tight, because the rice swells a little. You will make 18.

5. Pack the rolls seam side down and snug in one layer in a wide pot with a lid, a second layer on top if you need it. Pour over the remaining 3 tbsp lemon juice, the remaining 2 tbsp olive oil and 1½ cups water. The liquid should come about three quarters up the rolls.

6. Set a heatproof plate right on the rolls to keep them from unrolling. Bring to a simmer, cover the pot, turn the heat to low and cook 40 minutes (our kitchen practice: we add a quarter for 5,300 ft). Lift one out and cut it: the leaf should be soft and the filling hot through.

7 Cool the rolls in the pot for 30 minutes. Eat them warm or chilled, 3 a person, with a squeeze of lemon if you like. Put leftovers in the fridge within 2 hours (1 hour above 90 °F; CDC). They keep about 5 days in the fridge (our kitchen practice; we hold no published source for it yet). Reheat to 165 °F, or eat them cold.