



ROYAL  
VOLUNTARY  
SERVICE

## CAJUN MOOD- BOOSTING RICE

*by Mike Springer*

### For the Cajun rice

#### Ingredients

- 2 cups basmati rice
- 1/2 cup red lentils
- 1 can of kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 can of chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 4-6 free-range eggs
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 2-3 sprigs of fresh thyme, leaves stripped
- 2 cups baby spinach
- 1/2 cup roasted walnuts, chopped
- 4 cups chicken stock
- 2 tablespoons full-fat butter
- 2 teaspoons paprika
- 1 teaspoon lemon pepper seasoning
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Olive oil for frying

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## Method

- 1. Preheat the oven to 350°F (175°C).**
- 2. In a large oven-safe skillet or casserole dish, heat a little olive oil over medium heat. Add the onions, garlic, and thyme, and sauté until the onions are soft and translucent.**
- 3. Add the red lentils, kidney beans, and chickpeas to the skillet. Stir in the paprika, lemon pepper seasoning, salt, and pepper. Cook for a few minutes to allow the flavours to meld.**
- 4. Pour in the chicken stock and bring the mixture to a gentle boil.**
- 5. Stir in the basmati rice, ensuring it's evenly combined with the rest of the ingredients. Fold in the baby spinach until it wilts.**
- 6. Cover the skillet or casserole dish with a lid or aluminium foil, and transfer it to the preheated oven. Bake for about 25-30 minutes, or until the rice is cooked through and the liquid is absorbed.**
- 7. While the rice is baking, in a separate skillet, melt the butter over medium heat. Crack the eggs into the skillet and fry them to your desired doneness.**
- 8. Once the rice is cooked, remove it from the oven. Sprinkle the chopped roasted walnuts over the top.**
- 9. To serve, place a fried egg on top of each portion of rice. The creamy yolk will add a rich and satisfying flavor to the dish.**
- 10. Enjoy your Cajun Mood-Boosting Rice with family and friends!**



## For the **Ginger Zest Sparkler mocktail**

### Ingredients

- **1 tbsp stem ginger syrup**
- **2 slices of fresh orange**
- **Sparkling mineral water**
- **A pinch of grated nutmeg**
- **Dark chocolate**
- **Crushed ice**
- **Sprig of mint**

### Method

- 1. In a glass, muddle the stem ginger syrup and fresh orange slices.**
- 2. Add a pinch of grated nutmeg and a small piece of dark chocolate.**
- 3. Fill the glass with sparkling mineral water and stir well.**
- 4. Add crushed ice and garnish with a sprig of mint.**



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## OUR THANKS TO MIKE SPRINGER FOR THIS RECIPE.

**Eat Well Week is part of the Royal Voluntary Service Stay Safe, Warm and Well campaign, sponsored by long-term partner Yakult, which offers people wellbeing advice and support over winter. Happy Plates are tasty, nutritious dishes packed with ingredients identified by a Yakult nutritionist to boost mood. We call these recipes Happy Plates because that's how we hope they'll make you feel!**

**For more information on mood boosting foods, visit [yakult.info/41ufqRo](https://yakult.info/41ufqRo)**

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