

YALANJI

(STUFFED
VEGETABLES)

**Recipe by
Imad Mahfouz**

When you think of Syrian appetisers, stuffed vegetables is a classic. Yalanji is a vegetarian version of *Mahashi* (vegetables stuffed with rice and meat). The word "Yalanji" translates to "fake" or "liar" since it is a mahashi that has omitted the meat. While many assume the vegetables are the main ingredient, it is actually just the vehicle for a fragrant stuffing comprising of rice and a range of spices, herbs, and vegetables cooked in a rich tomato-based sauce. The dish is usually served cold. While the dish takes time and patience to prepare, the end result is well worth it.



ingredients

Vegetables

- 400 gr Eggplant
- 400 gr Zucchini
- 200 gr Green and/or Red Pepper



For the stuffing:

- 2 cups rice
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 2 tomatoes (chopped into small pieces)
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 2 onions
- 2 cloves of garlic (mashed)
- 1 tsp hot chilli powder
- 2 tbsp mashed tomatoes
- 1/2 bunch parsley (chopped)
- 1.5 cups water
- 1 tbsp mint powder
- 2 tbsp pomegranate molasses
- 1/2 lemon

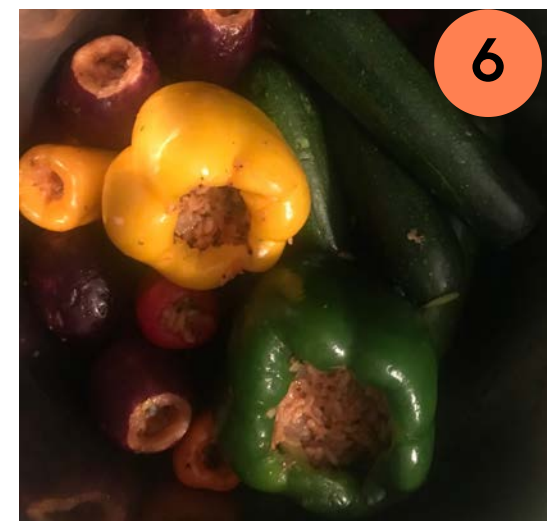
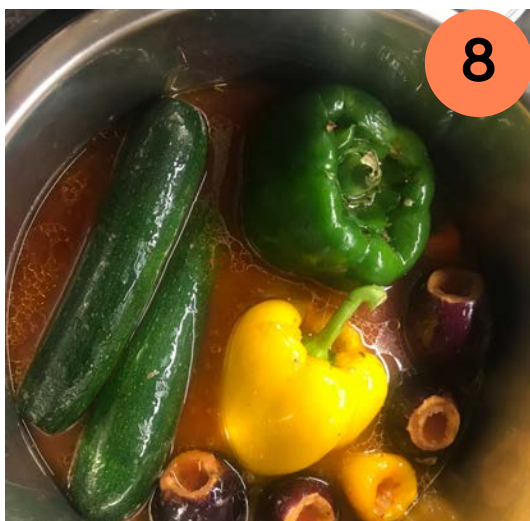


For the cooking sauce:

- 3 cups water
- 3 tbsp mashed tomatoes
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tbsp pomegranate molasses
- 1 tsp citric acid

directions

1. Remove the pulp of the eggplants and zucchinis using a veggie corer. Cut the tops of the peppers and scoop out the insides.
2. In a large pot, begin working on your stuffing. Add olive oil and onions. Sautee over medium heat for 2 minutes.
3. Add the rice and water, then the tomato and mashed tomato. Stir and add the salt, black pepper, hot chilli powder, and mint powder.
4. Mix gently, adding the mashed garlic, pomegranate molasses, and citric acid. Let cook until rice is finished.
5. Add parsley, remove from heat, and set aside to cool.
6. Once the stuffing is cooled, gently fill the vegetables with the stuffing and put them back into the same cooking pot.
7. In another pot or bowl, mix all the sauce ingredients together.
8. Transfer your sauce to the vegetable pot, pouring it on and around your stuffed vegetables.
9. Cover the pot and leave it on medium heat for one hour.
10. After the hour, remove from the heat and place in the fridge. Serve this dish cold.



tips

- Yalanji is a **vegetarian/vegan** dish packed full of flavour. You won't miss the meat in there, but if you're curious to try the meat version, search online for *Mahashi* or *Yabra* recipes.
- Arrange your vegetables in the pot with the vegetables that will take longer to cook on the bottom. In this case, eggplants on the bottom then zucchini, and peppers on the top.
- Serve this dish cold with lemon wedges & pomegranate seeds.



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the #CookWithNCC
series on
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