

Wild Rice Stuffed Grape Leaves

6 tablespoons olive oil

1 onion, chopped

2/3 cup (about 4 ½ ounces) long grain and wild rice (recipe recommends Uncle Ben's)

½ teaspoon ground allspice

1 ¾ cups water

¼ cup dried currants

¼ cup pine nuts

Grape leaves*

¼ cup lemon juice

Chopped fresh parsley

Fresh lemon wedges

Blanch grape leaves in a large pot of boiling water to soften. Using a slotted spoon, remove leaves from water and lay on paper towels to drain. Cut off protruding stems. Set leaves aside.

Heat 2 tbsp oil in heavy, medium sized saucepan over medium heat. Add onion and sauté until tender, about 5 minutes. Add rice and allspice, and stir 30 seconds. Add 1 ½ cups water and currants, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer until water is absorbed and rice is tender (about 20 minutes). Remove from heat.

Heat 1 tbsp oil in heavy, small skillet over medium-low heat. Add pine nuts and sauté until golden brown, about 6 minutes. Add pine nuts to rice. Season with salt and pepper.

Arrange 1 grape leaf, vein side up, on work surface. Place small amount of filling near stem.

Fold in sides, then roll up jelly roll fashion. Once all leaves are filled arrange them seam side down, very close together, in a large skillet. Drizzle 3 tbsp oil over the leaves. Add ¼ cup water and fresh lemon juice. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to low and simmer very gently until leaves are very tender (about 1 ½ hours). Check liquid level every 30 minutes and add ¼ cup water if needed. Cool completely before serving.

Yield: *an 8 oz jar of grape leaves contains around 30 leaves. Adjust the stuffing amount for the number and size of your fresh leaves.

Source: Epicurious and The Elegant Chef