

7. EGGS AND ACCOMPANIMENT

42. ***Bedh At-Tbeet*** (Brown Eggs) (If made without Tbeet)

Many non-ashkenazi traditions have a recipe for making long-cooked eggs, which are often eaten on Shabbat and during Seder Pesah. The slow cooking turns the egg white a light brown color, and brings out a marvelous flavor from the both the yolk and the white. The cooking process does not by itself turn the egg shell brown. Sephardi Jews will often add the peel of one or two onions to the water in order to stain the egg shell brown. One tea bags may also be used. Although this does not change the inside of the egg, it produces a nice aesthetic affect, so some Iraqis have adopted this Sephardi practice.

The Iraqi tradition is to eat these eggs on Shabbat morning by slicing one or two and putting them in a pita sandwich, together with fried eggplant, Middle Eastern salad, and 'amba, which is a pungent condiment made of pickled mangos. (Recipes for the eggplant and salad follow. 'Amba may be purchased in any specialty store. "Punjaji", of India, is an especially good brand.)

It is recommended to use farm fresh eggs. If refrigerated, let the eggs sit at room temperature. Place the eggs in a pot with a lot of water, also at room temperature. Place pot, uncovered, on a very low flame. When water gets very hot, close to boiling, cover pot. Leave on very low flame for at least ten hours. Remove from flame, drain water, and add cold tap water and ice. (This causes the skin to separate from the egg whites, which makes for easy peeling.) Drain ice water after 15 seconds and serve. If not ready to serve, leave eggs ice water for a few minutes and then remove and refrigerate. (When ready to serve, repeat process from the beginning in order to heat the eggs, allowing them to boil for 1 minute before removing from flame.)

In order to achieve the same result in much less time, a pressure cooker may be used. Place the eggs in a pressure cooker and add water to a level that is half the height of the eggs. Add 1 teaspoon lemon juice, which helps prevent breakage. Place pressure cooker, uncovered, on a very low flame. When water gets very hot, close to boiling, close the pressure cooker and raise flame to medium. When the pressure is at its highest, turn the flame to low and leave for just less than an hour. Shut flame and allow to cool. Then open pressure cooker and add ice water as described above. Serve or refrigerate and reheat as described above.

43. ***Babinjaan Muqli*** (Fried Eggplant)

Use nice, large eggplants with few seeds. Taste to make sure eggplant is not bitter. Peel eggplant and slice thinly. Put slices in a bowl and add ½ teaspoon salt per eggplant. Mix eggplant slices with salt and let stand for ½ hour. (The purpose of this is to draw liquid out of the eggplant; for those who avoid using salt, this effect can also be

achieved by allowing the eggplant slices to sit in direct sunlight.) Squeeze excess water from eggplant slices, 3 or 4 at a time. If needed, squeeze slices between paper towels to ensure that the liquid is drawn out. Fry in corn or canola oil until golden brown. Remove from oil and place on paper towel-lined plate. Serve.

44. *Zlata Bit-Tamaṭa* (Middle Eastern / Israeli salad)

Dice peeled cucumbers, tomatoes, and parsley to taste. Add diced scallions and sweet red pepper (pimento), if desired. Add a little olive oil and mix. Add a little bit of fresh-squeezed lemon and a few pinches of salt and mix. Serve.

45. *Bedh B'lahem / B'jeej* (Egg patties with meat or chicken)

In Iraq, these delightful egg patties were often served with pita bread and salad as a light meal, much like an appetizer. The patties make a particularly good sandwich, for example in pita bread. Whether as a sandwich or otherwise, we suggest serving this with a little bit of "Sabba Sauce" (see recipe under "condiments").

3 large eggs

½ lbs lean ground beef or ground chicken breast (chicken works very well in this dish)

1 large tomato, diced very finely

4 scallion stalks, diced very finely, white end included

1 heaping tablespoon celery leaves, diced finely (dark leaves from top of celery root)

1 tablespoon grated celery root

1 fresh hot pepper, diced finely

2 tablespoons white flour

½ tsp salt

½ tsp pepper

⅓ tsp cayenne

1 cup corn oil for frying

In a large bowl, beat eggs. Add everything else (not oil) and mix well. Make sure that the ground meat or chicken is separated and evenly distributed; not in clumps. Put ½ cup corn oil in frying pan and set on medium flame. When oil is hot, drop dollops of mixture with a large spoon, creating a patty roughly 2 inches in diameter. Repeat until pan is full (do not stack patties). Fry until brown (about 2 to 3 minutes) and turn patties over. Fry until evenly brown, turning patties as many times as needed. When ready, remove to paper towel-lined plate. Repeat process until all the mixture is used. Add oil if needed.

46. *Bedh Bala Lahem* (Vegetarian version of egg patties with meat)

In Iraq, these delightful egg patties were often served with pita bread and salad as a light meal, much like an appetizer. The patties make a particularly good sandwich, for

example in pita bread. Whether as a sandwich or otherwise, we suggest serving this with a little bit of “Sabba Sauce” (see recipe under “condiments”).

8 large eggs
3 plumb tomatoes, diced very finely
5 scallion stalks, diced very finely, white end included
1 bunch parsely, diced finely (dark leaves from top of celery root)
5 tablespoons white flour
5 tablespoons medium coarse bulgar wheat
½ tsp salt
¼ tsp pepper
¼ tsp cayenne
1 cup corn oil for frying

In a large bowl, beat eggs. Add everything else (not oil) and mix well. If mixture is too loose, add a little bit more flour. Put ½ cup corn oil in frying pan and set on medium flame. When oil is hot, drop dollops of mixture with a large spoon, creating a patty roughly 2 inches in diameter. Repeat until pan is full (do not stack patties). Fry until brown (about 2 to 3 minutes) and turn patties over. Fry until evenly brown, turning patties as many times as needed. When ready, remove to paper towel-lined plate. Repeat process until all the mixture is used. Add oil if needed.