

Add raw pistachios to stir-fry dishes.

Use them as a garnish in steaming hot soups.

Bake them into casseroles.

Add raw pistachios to grain dishes at the end of cooking. They're especially attractive with the lighter color grains, such as rice, quinoa, millet, and barley.

Include pistachios in any legume pates, such as a lentil pate. When the pate is sliced and arranged on a platter, the pistachios stand out and lend eye appeal.

Grind raw unsalted pistachios in an electric coffee grinder and add as a thickener to soups and sauces. Choose your basic ingredients carefully because ground pistachios will clearly affect the color of your finished dish.

PERSIAN RICE WITH SAVORY PISTACHIO SAUCE

1 1/2 C. (355 ml) Basmati brown rice

3 3/4 C. (894 ml) water

1 1/2 t. salt

1/3 C. (79 ml) currants

Pistachio Sauce

1 C. (237 ml) raw, unsalted pistachios

3 C. (717 ml) unsweetened soy milk

1 1/4 t. salt

freshly ground pepper to taste*

Vegetables

2 large carrots, coarsely grated

2 large zucchini squashes, coarsely grated

1 small onion, chopped

2 cloves garlic, thinly sliced

1/2 t. each oregano, basil, marjoram

3/4 t. salt

Freshly ground black pepper

2 T. extra virgin olive oil

2 T. water

1/4 C. (59ml) raw whole pistachios

Garnish

Chopped pistachios

Currants

1. First start rice cooking by combining the rice, water, and salt in a 2-quart (2 liter) saucepan. Cover, and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down and steam for 35 to 45 minutes, or until tender.
2. Put currants in a small bowl and cover with hot water to plump them while preparing remaining ingredients.
3. Next prepare sauce by grinding the pistachios in an electric coffee grinder in small batches. Pour ground nuts into a small bowl and set aside.
4. Combine soy milk, salt, and pepper in a 2 or 3-quart (2 or 3 liter) saucepan, and bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Watch carefully that it does not boil over. Slowly, add ground pistachios to the bubbling sauce, stirring constantly with a wire whip until sauce thickens, about 1 to 2 minutes. Turn off heat and set aside. Sauce gets thicker as it sits.
5. Combine carrots, zucchinis, onions, herbs, seasonings, olive oil, and water in a deep 12" (30 cm) skillet. Sauté over high heat until vegetables are soft, about 5 to 7 minutes.
6. Drain water from currants and add to skillet along with the 1/4 C. (59 ml) raw whole pistachios