

STUFFED ONIONS



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SERVES: 6–8 AS A MAIN COURSE, 12 AS AN APPETISER

1 walnut-sized piece of tamarind paste

5 large onions

1 tablespoon oil or melted ghee

salt, for sprinkling

2 teaspoons sugar

Stuffing

750 g (1 lb 10 oz) minced (ground) beef or lamb

100 g (3½ oz/½ cup) long-grain white rice, rinsed

1½ teaspoons Baharat

½ teaspoon ground turmeric

125 g (4 oz/½ cup) chopped, peeled tomatoes

2 tablespoons tomato paste (concentrated purée)

2 tablespoons chopped flat-leaf parsley

1 tablespoon oil

salt and freshly ground black pepper, to season

Soak the tamarind in 125 ml (4 fl oz/½ cup) warm water for 30 minutes. Strain into a bowl, pressing with the back of a spoon to separate the pulp. Reserve the liquid and discard the seeds and fibres.

Peel the onions and carefully cut out the root with a pointed knife. Slit the onion on one side through to the centre,

cutting from the top to the root end.

Drop the onions into a saucepan of boiling water and boil gently for 8–10 minutes, or until softened. Drain and cool.

In a mixing bowl, thoroughly combine the filling ingredients and season with salt and pepper.

Carefully separate the onion layers. The outer layers may be cut in half; leave the inner layers intact.

Place about a tablespoonful of the filling on each onion layer, then roll each one up firmly.

Grease a heavy-based saucepan with the oil or melted ghee. Pack the rolls in the pan, seam side down, lightly sprinkling each layer with salt.

Combine the reserved tamarind liquid with the sugar and 125 ml (4 fl oz/ $\frac{1}{2}$ cup) warm water, then pour over the rolls. Invert a heavy plate on top of the rolls to keep them intact during cooking. Cover and bring to a simmer over medium heat.

Reduce the heat to low and simmer gently for $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours.

Serve hot with salads, pickles and Khoubiz, or lukewarm as an appetiser.

Recipe placed by Corne Liebenberg