

◀ 300ml (½ pint) thick Greek yogurt
 2 tbsp grated cream of coconut
 2 tbsp freshly chopped coriander leaves

Heat the oil in a frying pan and sauté the okra for 5 minutes. Add the ginger, turmeric and chilli powder together with 1-2 tbsp water and stir over a high heat for 10-12 minutes. Mix the yogurt with the coconut cream and coriander and stir into the okra just before serving. If preparing this dish in advance do not add the yogurt until after it has been reheated. Serves 4.

Pilau rice

No traditional Indian meal would be complete without this flavourful and aromatic rice dish (below). This particular recipe, I have to admit, though, I learned from my boyfriend Adrian, who cooks it regularly.

300g (10oz) basmati rice
 2-3 tbsp vegetable oil
 2 onions, sliced
 1 whole cinnamon stick
 2 whole cloves
 6 cardamom pods, seeds removed
 4 black peppercorns

Wash the rice under running cold water until most of the starch has been removed. Drain well.

Heat the oil in a large saucepan and cook the onions until beginning to brown. Add the cinnamon, cloves, cardamom seeds and peppercorns and coat in the oil. When the aroma of the spices has been released, add the drained rice and stir for 1 minute. Add boiling water to cover and cook for 8-10 minutes or until the rice is just tender but not soggy. Drain well, remove the whole cinnamon stick and serve. Serves 4-6.



Plates, Ceramica Blue; napkin, Designers Guild; fork, The Conran Shop.

