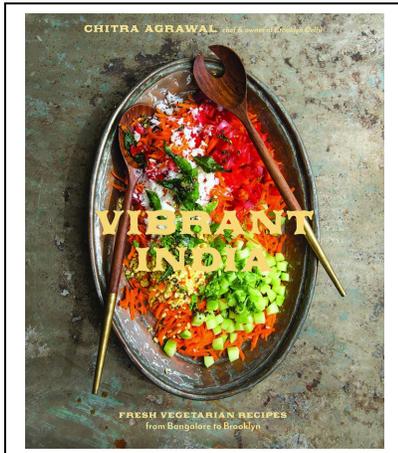




Reprinted with permission from [Vibrant India: Fresh Vegetarian Recipes from Bangalore to Brooklyn](#) by Chitra Agrawal, copyright © 2017. Published by Ten Speed Press, an imprint of Penguin Random House LLC. Photography credit: Erin Scott © 2017



## COCONUT RICE WITH CASHEWS

### *Kayi Anna*

All seasons • Serves 4  
Vegan, Gluten-Free

This rice is a celebration of coconut, which is an auspicious ingredient in South India, often used in Hindu religious ceremonies or pujas. Coconuts are cracked open and offered up to the gods during momentous occasions, like a new home purchase or a child graduating from college.

To enhance the coconut flavor even further, I cook the rice and fry the cashews in coconut oil. When in season, I change up the traditional recipe and add pomegranate seeds or red currants for their tart sweetness. This rice is perfect plain and great to carry on a picnic or to a potluck.

4 cups cooked turmeric rice (recipe follows); substitute jasmine rice for the basmati if you prefer\*  
1 cup unsweetened grated coconut (fresh, frozen, or dried)  
2 tablespoons plus 1/2 teaspoon coconut oil  
2 tablespoons cashews, broken into large pieces  
1/2 teaspoon black mustard seeds  
Pinch of asafetida (hing) powder  
1 teaspoon urad dal  
4 or 5 fresh curry leaves  
1 dried red chile, broken in half  
1/2 to 3/4 teaspoon salt  
1/4 cup pomegranate seeds or fresh red currants (optional)  
Chopped cilantro leaves, for garnish

\*Leftover rice also works well in this recipe.

Spread the cooked rice on a sheet pan to cool completely. Thaw frozen coconut or place dried coconut in a little hot water to plump it up.

Melt 1/2 teaspoon of the coconut oil in a wok or sauté pan over medium heat. Add the cashews to the wok, stirring them until they are fragrant and turn golden brown, a few minutes. Set the cashews aside to cool in a bowl lined with a paper towel.



Coat the bottom of the wok or a large frying pan with the remaining 2 tablespoons of coconut oil and place over medium heat. When melted, add one black mustard seed. When the seed sizzles and pops, add the rest of the mustard seeds and the asafetida. Keep a lid handy to cover the pan while the mustard seeds are popping. When the popping starts to subside (a few seconds), immediately add the urad dal. Stir to coat with oil, and turn the heat to medium-low. Continue to stir the dal so it evenly roasts, until it turns a reddish golden brown and smells nutty, less than a minute. Rub the curry leaves between your fingers a little to release their natural oils, and drop them and the dried red chile into the oil. Cover immediately, as moisture from the curry leaves will cause the oil to spatter. Then stir to evenly coat everything with oil, a few seconds.

Stir the cooked rice into the wok, coating it well with the oil and spices. Mix in the coconut and  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon of the salt. Stir-fry for a few minutes. Mix in the pomegranate seeds and cashews, reserving a few cashews for garnish. Turn off the heat. Taste for salt and adjust if needed. Garnish with the cilantro and reserved cashews before serving.

### **SIMPLE BASMATI RICE**

All seasons • Serves 3 or 4; makes about 4 cups  
Vegan, Gluten-Free

1 cup basmati rice, preferably Dehraduni\*  
 $\frac{1}{8}$  teaspoon turmeric powder (optional)

\*Since the Dehraduni variety of basmati rice has a very long grain, it yields about four times its dry quantity, but most other varieties of basmati or long-grained jasmine rice yield about three times their dry quantity.

Wash the rice in several changes of water until the water runs clear. Soak the rice in water, generously covered, for at least 30 minutes. Drain thoroughly, using a fine-mesh sieve.

Place the rice and  $1\frac{3}{4}$  cups water in a medium saucepan. Mix in the turmeric powder, if using. Place the saucepan over high heat and bring to a boil. Once the water is boiling, cover the saucepan and turn the heat to the lowest setting on your stove.

Cook until the rice is tender and there is no water left in the pan, about 15 minutes. Turn off the heat. Remove the saucepan from the stove and leave it covered for 10 minutes, to allow the grains to separate. Fluff with a fork before serving.



Free to use under a CC BY license. Images from Shutterstock.com by © iStockphoto.com and © iStockphoto.com. All rights reserved. Photo by iStockphoto.com, 2013-2014.