Family Chef: A taste of home

Maqluba

by Refika, Kahramanmaras camp

Difficulty: Medium
Preparation time: 20 minutes
Cooking time: 10 minutes

Ingredients:
1 Chicken breast
2 cups of rice
2-3 eggplants
1 cup of peanuts
Oil
Salt
Pepper

Boil the chicken breast first and let it absord its broth.

Rinse the rice and slice the eggplants before frying them in cooking oil.

Place the peanuts in hot water so they can easily peel. Once peeled, fry the peanuts in a pan.

Next, pour half of the recipe's rice into water.

Add in the eggplants.

Shred the chicken breasts into little pieces and add to the other ingredients, saving a little for later.

Now add the remaining rice on top.

Pour four cups of chicken broth into the dish and then let it cook for 10 minutes.

Serve the meal by adding the peanuts and remaining chicken pieces on top.

Meet the Chef

Welcome to The World Food Programme's (WFP) Family Chef series. Explore the culinary treasures and cooking abilities of refugees who benefit from WFP's cash-based transfers, an initiative that allows individuals to buy the food they need to cook their traditional dishes.

Refika, 50, is from Lattakia and arrived at the Kahramanmaras camp three years ago. As a mother of three children, she enjoys having company, so she invites her neighbours to cook with her. She is very quick, hospitable and likes cooking for her guests.

I ask her to tell me how she escaped Syria and became placed in the camp. "We lived in Lattakia, and had a house in the Bayir village. The conflict in Lattakia increased so we went to the village house. It was during Ramadan month. When we tried to go back to Lattakia, we discovered the roads were closed. Eventually, we had to come to Turkey."

Refika's husband took her and their youngest son to the border and then stayed behind with their other two sons. "We were so tired, we walked a long way. I saw a Turkish soldier at the border, I talked to him because I felt like he was a son to me. We walked for hours, my dress was covered with dust, and my shoes were torn apart. I couldn't stop crying while we were walking." Refika and one of her sons first went to Yayladagi camp in Hatay, Turkey. The next day, the rest of the family joined her, and three days later the soldiers came and took them all to Kahramanmaras camp. "First they housed us in a boarding school where we stayed for 25 days before being moved to the Kahramanmaras camp. Thank God, I am with my family in a safe place now. I am thankful they let us in, we are now far from the bombs."