

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 2005

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**SIMPLY “SCENTSATIONAL”
Aromatic Rice: Cooking Tips, Best Uses, and Enticing Stir-Ins**

Houston – The simple flavor of a steaming bowl of rice can be delicious on its own, but add bold ethnic flavors and, in a blink of an eye, it can transport you around the world. Below are tips for preparing aromatic rice, best uses and super simple ways to dress it up, courtesy of Riviana Foods Inc., makers of **Mahatma**®, **Carolina**®, and **S & W**® Thai Jasmine and Indian Basmati, as well as the new **Success**® **Boil-in-Bag** Jasmine.

Preparing Aromatic Rice

- Preparation methods and cooking times for jasmine and basmati rice are similar to those of U.S.-grown long grain white rice. Once ingredients come to a boil, reduce heat and simmer 15 minutes. For best results, experiment by first following cooking directions on product packaging. Liquid ingredient measurements can later be modified according to personal preference.
- For drier rice, use ¼ cup less liquid. For moister rice, increase liquid by ¼ cup. Chicken or beef broth may be substituted for water if desired.
- For ultra convenience with no measuring, try **Success**® **Boil-in-Bag** Jasmine, which cooks in just 8 minutes.
- Adding lemon peel shortly before rice has finished cooking gives it a light, bright flavor.
- When preparing basmati, allow grains to soak in water 20 minutes prior to cooking to maximize grain elongation.
- For perfect pilafs, sauté rice in oil to firm and toast the starchy exterior. This helps the liquid absorb more evenly.

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Aromatic Rice: Best Uses

The distinctive, delicate fragrance of Thai jasmine and Indian basmati are the perfect match for exotic flavors of ethnic cuisines. “When preparing an ethnic meal, for the most authentic dining experience, use the type of rice traditional to that cuisine,” says Debbie Jaramillo, Test Kitchen Manager for Riviana Foods Inc. “Think jasmine for Thai curries, or basmati for Indian pilafs.”

Here are some quick tips for cooking with Thai jasmine or Indian basmati.

Thai Jasmine

- In Thailand, jasmine rice is often used in meals to temper the region’s bold, fiery cuisine.
- Seasonings typically paired with jasmine rice include flavors from Thailand and Vietnam: lemongrass, cilantro, hot chilies, fish sauce, limes or lemons, basil, coconut milk, nuts, fruits, garlic, shallots and hot and flavorful curries.
- Cooked jasmine rice remains soft when chilled, making it an excellent choice for salads or silky rice puddings.
- In Thai and Vietnamese cuisines, jasmine rice is often used in satays, curries, puddings, and fried rice.

Indian Basmati

- Generally used in Indian and Middle Eastern cuisines, basmati rice cooks dry, light and very separate. Grains are thinner and longer than traditional long grain rice.
- When purchasing Indian basmati, dryness in rice is prized. The drier the rice, the greater its ability to absorb flavorful curry sauce or chutney.
- Basmati is perfect for pilafs and biryani, a baked Indian rice dish made with saffron, nuts, dried fruit, vegetables and chicken, seafood or meat.
- In India, basmati is frequently cooked with cumin, cinnamon or rose petals to provide a fragrant base to other foods. In Iran, basmati rice is often made more special with the addition of saffron.
- Basmati is often used in stir-fry, salads and Indian rice puddings.

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Rice: Dress it Up!

The versatility of rice is just one of its key benefits. Below are simple ways to make aromatic rice even more special.

Starting with hot, cooked rice...

- Sprinkle with fried scallions, shallots, garlic or ginger.
- Add grated lemon zest, chopped fresh mint, a dab of butter and cooked peas.
- Stir in peanut butter and chopped scallions, sprinkle with chopped peanuts.
- Stir in grated parmesan cheese and sautéed onions.
- Season with toasted sesame oil or tamari.
- Stir in chopped dried fruit and toasted nuts.

When preparing ...

- Sauté garlic, add rice and cook in chicken broth.
- Cooking jasmine rice in jasmine tea intensifies its sweet floral flavor.
- Add whole cloves and a stick of cinnamon while cooking basmati rice.
- Substitute a combination of chicken broth and white wine for water.
- Cook rice with a few saffron threads, stir in cooked peas
- Cook with shiitake mushrooms for an earthy, smoky flavor.

With all it has going – affordable, yet elegant, always in great taste, and infinite ways to accessorize – aromatic rice, like the perfect black dress, will remain a classic staple for years to come.

*For more aromatic rice information or recipes, visit www.rivianakitchens.com. Based in Houston, Texas, **Riviana Foods Inc.** is one of the largest processors, marketers and distributors of branded and private label rice products in the United States. Principal brands include **Mahatma**® (www.mahatmarice.com), **Success**® (www.successrice.com), **Carolina**® (www.carolinarice.com), **Water Maid**® (www.watermaidrice.com), **River**® (www.riverrice.com), and **S & W**® (www.s-and-wrice.com).*

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