

# Stuffed Cauliflower Leaves

By Fadi Kattan

Stuffed vegetables are a daily delicacy in Palestine, ubiquitous yet varied. There are as many different ways of doing them as there are seasons, tastes, and customs. It is one of those dishes so entrenched in centuries-long family tradition that everybody agrees that *mahshi* is great, but no one seems to be able to agree on a common recipe.

We stuff everything in Palestine, from carrots to aubergines, cabbage leaves to courgettes, cucumbers to cauliflower leaves. We stuff them with rice or *freekeh*, with or without meat, with meat or chicken under them in the pot. We cook them in a dressing of lemon juice, olive oil, and water, in a thick yogurt sauce – *laban jamid*, or in a tomato sauce.

Today's recipe is not only tasty but a perfect healthy vegan dish that helps you stay ethical in your kitchen. Don't throw away those beautiful cauliflower leaves. Fill them with the best super-grain, *freekeh*, and enjoy!

## Ingredients

2500 gm whole cauliflower leaves	150 gm lemon juice
300 gm <i>freekeh</i>	500 gm hot water
300 gm chopped tomatoes	2 potatoes (medium size)
1 bunch of parsley	2 tomatoes (medium size)
1 bunch of mint	25 gm salt
200 gm green onions	200 gm olive oil
200 gm chickpeas (boiled and peeled)	
100 gm pine nuts	



## Spice mix (24 gm)

10 gm allspice
3 gm pepper
2 gm cinnamon
1 gm cloves
2 gm chili flakes
2 gm sumac
2 gm nutmeg
1 gm turmeric
1 gm cardamom



## Method

1. Wash the cauliflower leaves, cut out the stalks (keep them to line the bottom of the pot).
2. Cut the leaves into pieces 10 cm wide.
3. Blanch the leaves in boiling water and immediately cool them in a bowl of ice water. Leave to drain over a colander.
4. Finely chop the tomatoes, parsley, mint, and green onions.
5. Soak the *freekeh* in warm water for fifteen minutes.
6. Cook the *freekeh* in slightly salted water until *al dente*. Cool with cold water through a colander.
7. Grind and mix all the spices together.
8. Slice the tomatoes and potatoes into 1-cm-thick slices to line the bottom of the pot.
9. Mix the chopped vegetables, pine nuts, and herbs with the *freekeh*, the spices, the salt, and half the olive oil.
10. Line the bottom of the pot with some oil, the stalks, and the potatoes and tomatoes.
11. Stuff and roll the leaves with the *freekeh* and herb mix.
12. Arrange the stuffed leaves in the pot and add the hot water, lemon juice, and a pinch of salt.
13. Cook on a high flame until the water starts to boil, then reduce to a low flame until cooked. Check that there is always a bit of water at the bottom of the pot. Cooking should take 1h 30 min to 1h 45 min.
14. Let the cooked leaves rest in the pot for a few minutes before flipping the pot over onto a serving plate.

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