



IRANIAN

Kabab Koobideh

COMPLEXITY	SERVES	PREP	COOK	TECHNIQUE	CUT
Involved	4	30 min + 2 hr	10 min	Grill	Ground beef

Ingredients

- 800 g (1¾ lb) ground beef, 80/20 (or half beef, half lamb)
- 2 large onions, finely grated
- 1½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp black pepper
- ½ tsp ground turmeric
- 1 tsp baking soda (optional, for a softer texture)
- Pinch of saffron, ground and steeped in 2 tbsp hot water
- 2 tbsp melted butter, for brushing
- Flat metal skewers, 2 cm (¾ in) wide
- To serve: saffron rice, grilled tomatoes, sumac and flatbread

Steps

1. Grate the onions and squeeze them hard in a cloth or sieve until almost dry. Discard the juice, because too much moisture makes the kebabs fall off the skewers.
2. Add the onion to the beef with the salt, pepper, turmeric and baking soda. Knead for 5 minutes, until the meat turns sticky, pale and almost paste-like.
3. Cover and refrigerate for 2 hours so the mixture firms up.
4. Divide into 8 portions. Wet your hands, press a portion firmly around a flat skewer in a thin layer about 15 cm (6 in) long, and pinch deep finger grooves along it.
5. Heat a charcoal or gas grill to high, with the grate about 10 cm (4 in) above the heat. A thin kebab needs fierce heat.
6. Lay the skewers across the grill and cook for 3 minutes until the underside is browned and the meat releases easily.
7. Turn and cook another 3 to 4 minutes until browned all over and 71°C (160°F) inside. Brush with the saffron water and butter.
8. Slide the meat off the skewers onto flatbread to keep it hot, and serve with rice, tomatoes and sumac.

Notes

- **No grill?** Use a very hot cast-iron pan, 3 minutes per side, or a broiler.
- **Rest the mix:** do not skip the chill; it keeps the meat on the skewer.
- **Make ahead:** shape onto skewers a day ahead and keep covered in the fridge.
- **Pair with:** a Shirazi salad of diced cucumber, tomato and onion with lime juice.