

"Chicken biryani, thanks to Dora"

Dora del Hoyo's example is an inspiration for the young people working in the Jahazi Conference Centre in Mombasa, Kenya. The first phase of Dora's cause of canonization was recently concluded in Rome.

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I work in Jahazi Conference Centre situated in Mombasa, Kenya. My work is like Dora's, and because of that I go to her intercession often, asking her to help me with the work

at hand and with the formation of the young people working with me. We have students doing their studies at Tewa Training Centre who come to do practical work in the Conference Centre.

Let us take a look at a typical day in the kitchen. The students arrive at 8.45 am and I check how they are dressed. Personal grooming is important. It has a huge impact on the personal attitude. Clean and well turned-out students cheer the mood, especially on a busy day when for example we are preparing a special lunch.

Briefing of the day's events follows. After the briefing, the first fifteen minutes are spent keeping the department clean. We clean the shelves, window mesh, drawers and different areas following the daily and weekly cleaning schedules. There is some disturbance with the

flies as it is their season. Water with vinegar is used to clean the surfaces frequently to facilitate working.

Esther is assigned this task. She does it very well and even suggests we should buy an electric machine for catching the flies.

The actual preparation and production begins. The menu is displayed on the white board and each student takes her position.

Today we are making a typical lunch from the coastal region of Kenya. The menu reads: Chicken biryani, Fried fish, *Maharagwe ya nazi (beans with coconut)*, *Viazi Karai (potatos, fried)*, *Bhajia, wali wa nazi (rice with coconut)* and *Mchicha*. It should be ready by 1.00pm. We have 36 guests.

I go through the menu with Catherine who will prepare the Chicken biryani. She grates the coconut using *Mbuzi* (a traditional grater). She grates enough for the

day. It will be used to prepare *maharagwe ya nazi, wali wa nazi and mchicha wa nazi*. The chicken biryani does not need coconut but it requires a lot of concentration because of the variety of spices that are to be used.

She divides the chicken into portions..... I check on her occasionally. The other students are busy with what has been assigned to them. They clear as they work. This ensures order and efficiency: there are a variety of dishes to be produced and also the same sauce pans need to be used by others.

At 12.30 all the students serve and present the food to the supervisor. The chicken biryani has come out as expected! The *viazi karai* lost their colour but are okay; the rest is all in order. To crown it all there is also the refreshing tamarind juice.

Esther and Brenda make a fascinating fruit arrangement. The meal is presented in the dining room.

The guests enjoy their meal. They go away happier than they came. The dishes come back empty! Everyone in the kitchen smiles and feels motivated to do better next time. All give suggestions on what can improve. I give thanks to Dora for keeping an eye on us, and ask her to teach us to sanctify this work of ours that causes so much joy for others.

Sussie Gusigolo

RECIPE FOR CHICKEN BIRYANI

INGREDIENTS FOR 25 PEOPLE

Chicken (portioned and precooked)
5kg

Green pawpaw. Grated(Raw) 500gms

Cloves 1 ½ Tsp

Cardamon 1 ½ Tsp

Garlic 3 cloves

Cumin powder 1Tsp

Peppercorn or white pepper ½ Tsp

Dhania 2b

Fresh ginger pounded 1pt

Chillies (Red chopped) 4pcs

Paprika 1 Table spoon

Yoghurt (Natural) 750 ml

Tomato paste 250gms

Onion (sliced) ½ kg

Dhana jeera 1Tsp

Potatoes (cubes) 500gms

Rice 1 ½ kg

Ghee 200gms

Salt 1 ½ Table spoon

Tomatoes Blanched skinned and
chopped) 500gms

METHOD FOR BIRYANI

- Peel and grate the pawpaw and set aside
- Heat half the ghee and fry the onion until brown and crisp.
- Remove the onions and set aside.
- Heat the remaining ghee and fry the garlic add pounded cloves, Cardamons, cinnamon, garlic, dhana jeera, dhania, ginger, peppercorns or pepper and chillies and stir it well.
- Add pawpaw, yoghurt, tomatoes, paprika tomato paste or puree and salt.
- Add chicken stock, simmer for twenty minutes and then add

chicken simmer for half an hour.

- Mix the food colour with little water and sprinkle it in the chicken. Stir gently.
- Put half of the onions and leave some for garnishing, add the potato cubes and continue cooking for twenty minutes.
- Serve with boiled rice.

N/B:

- One can use boneless chicken, cut into cubes and browned with salt and oil
- Use oil or fat if you do not have ghee.
- You can also use beef following the same procedure.

en-uk/article/chicken-biryani-thanks-to-dora/ (02/25/2026)