

This recipe is based on a pan braised mince dish we found in a Persian book by Neda Afrashi. It is a great mince dish for the family, when you are tired of meat balls and lasagne. You can vary the portion of mince. I did half this for our family of four but we had a lot of accompaniments!

1 onion  
500g mince  
1 teaspoon turmeric  
1 teaspoon curry powder  
1 teaspoon good quality paprika  
1 teaspoon sumac  
half 400g can chopped tomatoes  
garlic clove thinly sliced  
salt & pepper

1. This recipe is easiest in a food processor but you can do it with a grater and bowl too. First peel your onion and grate it. Squeeze the grated onion on the side of the food processor bowl or the bowl you have grated it into and tip off any liquid.
2. If using your food processor add the blade attachment and put your mince and spices in with the onion. Give it a good whizz so it becomes a well mixed ball. If using a standard bowl give it a really good mix. Your mince won't be quite as fine but as long as it hangs together as a ball that is good.
3. You are going to make the mince into a pancake that covers the whole base of a fry pan so find a frypan that is the right size for your amount of mince. Heat a little oil in the frypan.
4. Press the meat mixture into the frypan so it covers the whole bottom and goes a little up the sides because as the mince cooks it will shrink a little. There should be no cracks in the meat.
5. Keep the pan on moderate heat until the bottom has firmed up - usually about ten minutes. Then take a fish slice or similar and cut lengthwise several times across the fry pan so you make slices of meat that are about 3-4 cm wide. Turn up the heat to high just for a minute or so to brown the meat.
6. Turn the heat back down to low. Tip over the tomatoes and if necessary add some water so there is fluid around the meat slices. Sprinkle over the garlic slices and season with salt and pepper. Cover and cook gently for around 15 minutes. Then take the lid off and cook for another 15 or so minutes until the meat is cooked.
7. Serve with rice or flatbread as well as yoghurt and a salad or a selection of antipasto like olives, pepper slices and hummus. You can also let people season the meat with more sumac and paprika if they wish.

