



**Shole Zard**  
(Persian Saffron Rice Pudding)

**SERVES 2**

1 cup fragrant rice  
2 cups sugar  
1/4 unsalted butter  
1/2 cup blanched almond slivers  
1/2 cup pistachio slivers  
1/2 tsp saffron  
1/2 tsp cardamom powder  
1/2 cup rose water  
2 tsp cinnamon powder  
4-8 cups of water, depending on type of rice

**1.** Wash the rice, use 4 cups of water and bring the rice

to boil until it is super soft.  
**2.** Then add 2 cups of sugar. At this point, the rice will become more watery and starchy.  
**3.** Boil for a couple of minutes and add butter.  
**4.** Add cardamom powder (depending on the kind of rice, you may need to add more hot water), hot-brewed saffron water, almond slivers and rose water and turn off the heat.

*This dish can be served hot or cold. Serve in porcelain/glass bowls. Decorate with pistachio slivers and cinnamon powder.*

**THINGS TO REMEMBER**

When buying Persian saffron check that the threads are all vivid crimson colour with a slightly lighter orange-red colour on the tips. This indicates that it is not cheap saffron that has been tinted red to look expensive. If saffron threads have a dull, brick red colour that is indicative of age. Also, well preserved saffron is dry and brittle to touch. Some traders let it be slightly moist to add to the weight.

**HOW TO BREW SAFFRON**

**Hot Brew:** Put a pinch of powdered saffron (about 1/4th tsp) in a small glass cup and add one large tbsp of boiled water. Allow it to cool only for a few seconds before adding to the cup and then cover with a lid. Then let it brew in a warm place for 10 to 15 mins.

**Cold Brew:** You can also make a cold-brewed saffron using ice. Put the same amount of saffron into a small glass cup, add crushed ice to it, cover and leave in a cool place. Allow it to infuse until the ice is melted or for at least 10 mins.

After successfully dabbling in different forms of arts from writing to music, and from painting to carving, Anaida Parvaneh has now turned chef and restaurateur and runs SodaBottleOpenerWala in Powai, Mumbai.