Turkey Biryani

[**DAVID TANIS**](http://cooking.nytimes.com/64537581-david-tanis/my-recipes)

**YIELD**6 servings

**2** **turkey legs, about 3 1/2 pounds (or 1 1/2 pounds leftover roasted turkey meat, preferably leg and wing)**

**Kosher salt**

**¼** **cup plain yogurt**

**1** **tablespoon grated ginger**

**1** **tablespoon grated garlic**

**2** **teaspoons garam masala**

**1** **teaspoon ground turmeric**

**¼** **teaspoon cayenne**

**2** **cups best-quality basmati rice**

**6** **tablespoons ghee, clarified butter or vegetable oil**

**2** **large onions, sliced in 1/8 inch half-moons**

**1** **tablespoon tomato paste**

**4** **cups turkey or chicken broth**

**½** **teaspoon black peppercorns**

**6** **cloves**

**6** **cardamom pods**

**1** **2-inch stick cinnamon**

**½** **cup golden raisins**

**1** **cup raw cashews**

**4** **hard-cooked eggs, shelled, optional**

**½** **cup roughly chopped cilantro, leaves and tender stems**

**Yogurt sauce (**[**see recipe**](http://www.nytimes.com/recipes/12967/Yogurt-Sauce.html)**)**

Nutritional Information

PREPARATION

1. Season turkey legs with salt and roast for 45 minutes at 375 degrees. Let cool, remove skin and bones, then chop meat into rough 1-inch pieces. (If using leftover turkey, simply chop the cooked meat.)
2. In a mixing bowl, combine yogurt, ginger, garlic, garam masala, turmeric and cayenne, plus 1 teaspoon salt. Add the turkey meat, mix well, and let marinate in mixture for 30 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, wash and rinse the rice with cold water until the water runs clear. Soak rice in cold water 20 minutes, then drain in a colander.
4. Melt 4 tablespoons ghee over medium-high heat in a wide, heavy-bottomed ovenproof Dutch oven. In batches, fry the onions until crisp and brown, about 5 to 7 minutes per batch. Drain on paper towels and salt lightly. Return half the onions to the pot and reserve the other half.
5. When onions begin to sizzle, add the turkey mixture, stirring well to coat, and let fry lightly for 3 to 4 minutes. Add tomato paste and stir to combine, then add 1 cup broth and bring to a simmer. Cook 2 minutes, then add 3 cups broth and bring to a gentle boil. Taste broth; it should be well salted and highly seasoned. Add the peppercorns, cloves, cardamom and cinnamon.
6. Heat oven to 375 degrees. Add drained rice to pot and stir. Adjust heat to a brisk simmer and cook, uncovered, for 8 minutes, or until liquid is absorbed and the surface of the rice looks dry. Top with reserved fried onions. Cover tightly and bake for 20 minutes. Remove and let rest for 10 minutes. (The biryani may be cooked to this point several hours ahead and reheated.)
7. In a small skillet, melt 2 tablespoons ghee over medium-high heat. When ghee is hot, add raisins and lightly fry for about 1 minute, until heated through and puffed a bit. Using a slotted spoon, remove to a small bowl. In the remaining ghee, fry cashews until barely golden, about 2 minutes. Remove and combine with raisins. Sprinkle with salt.
8. Pile the biryani on a large platter. Top with raisins and cashews. Garnish with hard-cooked eggs if desired and shower with cilantro. Serve with yogurt sauce.