

## **Cilantro Coconut Rice**

From [Epicurious.com](http://Epicurious.com)

3 c. basmati rice  
¾ c. sweetened flaked coconut  
1 T. finely chopped peeled fresh ginger  
1 jalapeño finely chopped  
2 T. vegetable oil  
4 c. water  
1 t. salt  
2 c. packed fresh cilantro sprigs  
4 scallions or half a red onion, chopped

Put oven rack in middle position and preheat oven to 350°F. Spread coconut in a shallow baking pan and toast in oven, stirring occasionally, until pale golden, 10 to 12 minutes. Cool completely.

Wash rice in several changes of cold water in a bowl until water is almost clear. Soak rice in cold water 30 minutes, then drain well in a sieve.

Cook ginger and jalapeño in 1 T. oil in a 4-quart heavy pot over moderate heat, stirring, until chile is softened, about 2 minutes. Add rice and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 2 minutes. Stir in water and ½ t. salt and bring to a boil, covered. Reduce heat to low and cook, covered, until rice is tender and water is absorbed, 12 to 15 minutes.

While rice cooks, pulse together coconut, cilantro, scallions, and remaining tablespoon oil and ½ t. salt in a food processor until finely chopped. Add cilantro mixture to cooked rice and stir gently until combined well.

## **Cilantro Soup**

From [Gourmet.com](http://Gourmet.com)

1½ lb cilantro (5 large bunches)  
4 c. chicken broth  
1 T. olive oil  
8 oz. blanched almonds (1½ cups)  
2 T. unsalted butter  
½ c. chopped white onion

½ c. chopped leek  
1 garlic clove, chopped  
1 ½ t. all-purpose flour  
¼ c. dry white wine  
3 c. whole milk  
1 t. salt

Cut bottom 2 inches of stems from cilantro bunches, then rinse well in several changes of cold water and drain.

Blanch cilantro in boiling water for 3 minutes, then drain and transfer to a bowl of ice water. Drain, pressing out excess water, then chop. Puree cilantro with 3 c. chicken broth until smooth, 2-3 minutes per batch. Pour through a medium mesh sieve set over a large bowl, pressing hard on solids. (If you have a lot of solids left, return to blender with the remaining cup of chicken broth and blend again. Strain into bowl.)

Heat olive oil in a medium heavy skillet over medium heat, then add almonds and cook, stirring, until golden, 5-8 minutes. Reserve.

Heat butter in a 4- to 5-qt heavy pot over medium-low heat, then add onion, leek, and garlic and cook, stirring, until softened, 3-5 minutes. Add flour and cook, stirring, 1 minute. Add wine in a slow stream while stirring, and continue stirring 1 minute. Whisk in milk in a slow stream, then add salt and bring to a simmer, stirring. Remove from heat.

Put milk mixture and fried almonds in blender, in batches if necessary, and blend until smooth, at least 3 minutes per batch. Return milk mixture to pot and bring to a simmer over medium, stirring to avoid burning. Stir in cilantro liquid and return to a simmer, stirring occasionally. Season with salt to taste.

Makes 2 quarts.