

**SAFFRON RICE SALAD WITH RED PEPPERS,
CUCUMBERS AND PISTACHIO NUTS**

Serves 6.

2 T. olive oil
1 cup chopped onion
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 1/2 cups long-grain white rice
3 cups water or chicken broth
1 1/2 tsp. salt, divided use
Large pinch saffron threads
1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
1 clove garlic, minced
1 tsp. fresh oregano, minced
1/4 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
1/8 to 1/4 tsp. red pepper flakes
1 red bell pepper, finely diced
1 small cucumber, peeled, seeded, and finely diced
1/4 cup toasted salted pistachio nuts
2 T. chopped Italian parsley

1. Heat olive oil in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Add the onion and garlic; cook, stirring often until onion is tender, about 6 minutes. Add the rice and cook, stirring constantly, until rice begins to turn white. Add the water or broth, saffron and 1 tsp. salt. Bring mixture to a boil, stirring often. Lower heat, cover and cook until rice absorbs all the liquid and is tender, 18 to 22 minutes. Remove from heat and let stand 10 minutes. Uncover and fluff with a fork. Let cool at least 15 minutes or longer.

2. In a large bowl, whisk lemon juice, olive oil, garlic, oregano, pepper, pepper flakes, and remaining 1/2 tsp. salt or to taste. Add the rice to the dressing and toss to combine. Toss in the red bell pepper, cucumber, parsley and pistachio nuts. Serve immediately or cover and refrigerate until serving time. Serve at room temperature or cold.