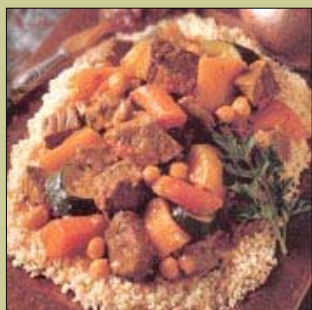


Moroccan Beef & Couscous

Serves 6



Pairings

A full-bodied wine such as a Rhone Valley Hermitage or Cote Rotie, or a powerful Zinfandel from California.

Ingredients

For Harissa:

3 dried small hot red chili peppers (such as chilies de arbol), stemmed
1/2 cup finely ground walnuts
5 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
2 garlic cloves
1 tablespoon Tabasco sauce

For Stew:

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 pound choice grade beef tenderloin tips, or top sirloin, cut into 1-inch chunks
1 large onion (about 8 ounces), coarsely chopped
3 garlic cloves, minced
4 Roma tomatoes, coarsely chopped
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/2 teaspoon dried red pepper flakes
1/2 tablespoon cumin seeds, toasted and ground
1/2 tablespoon coriander seeds, toasted and ground
1 (about 2 inches) length of cinnamon stick
1 teaspoon crushed saffron

3 1/2 cups warm water plus 3 cups water
2 carrots (about 6 ounces), cut into 1 1/2-inch lengths (larger ends should be split)
1 russet potato (about 8 ounces), peeled and cut into 1 1/2-inch chunks
1 small butternut squash (about 12 ounces), peeled, seeded, and cut into 1 1/2-inch chunks
1 zucchini (about 4 ounces), cut into 1-inch lengths
1 small eggplant (about 8 ounces), cut into 1 1/2-inch chunks
1/2 cup cooked chickpeas
1/2 cup chopped cilantro, including stems
1/3 cup chopped parsley

For the Couscous:

2 cups water
2 cups couscous

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Calories: 724
Cholesterol: 53mg
Fiber: 10g

Fat: 38g
Sodium: 85mg
Cal. from Fat: 47%

Carbohydrates: 72g
Protein: 26g
Cal. from Carbs: 40%

Preparation

TO PREPARE HARISSA

1. Combine all the harissa ingredients in a blender and blend to a paste.
2. If necessary, add a little water to thin.

TO PREPARE STEW

1. Heat the oil in a Dutch oven over medium-high heat.
2. Add the beef and sear for about 8 minutes, or until golden brown.
3. Turn down the heat to medium, add the onion, and cook for about 5 minutes, until it begins to soften.
4. Add the garlic, half of the tomatoes, the black pepper and red pepper flakes, the cumin, coriander, and cinnamon, and cook for about 5 minutes longer.
5. In a small bowl, mix the saffron in 1/2 cup of the warm water, soften for about 2 minutes, and add to the meat.
6. Add the remaining 3 cups of water and bring the broth to a boil.
7. Turn down the heat and slowly simmer, covered, for about 10 minutes.
8. Skim the surface of the broth to remove any impurities.
9. Add the carrots and simmer, covered, about 5 minutes.
10. Add the potato, squash, and zucchini, and simmer, covered, for 5 minutes longer.
11. Add the eggplant and chickpeas, and simmer, covered, for 5 more minutes.
12. Stir in the remaining tomatoes, the cilantro, and parsley.
13. Season to taste with salt and pepper, and simmer, covered, for about 10 minutes longer, or until all the vegetables are tender.

TO PREPARE COUSCOUS

About 20 minutes before serving, prepare the couscous.

1. Bring the 3 cups of water to a boil in a saucepan.
2. Remove from the heat, stir in the couscous, and cover.
3. Let rest for about 10 minutes.
4. Fluff with a fork and season with salt.

TO SERVE

1. Place a heaping pile of couscous on warm serving plates.
2. Spoon a small amount of the stew over the center of the couscous.
3. Fill separate tureens or serving bowls with the remaining couscous and stew, and place them in the center of the table.
4. Put the harissa in a small bowl to pass at the table.
5. Guests may help themselves to the stew and add the harissa to season their meal to taste.

Harissa, a traditional accompaniment in many North African countries, is a highly seasoned puree that is passed around the table. Diners take a small (or large) amount and stir it into the stew to season it to their liking.