



CHICKEN TAGINE

Makes 4-6 servings.

This North African nutritious chicken stew with rich layers of fruity and spicy flavor is generally cooked and served in a clay pot-called tagine. It is better to make it a day before for all the flavors to blend.

The dish can be a meal in itself served with couscous and warm pita.

Do not be taken aback by the number of ingredients. Most of them are spices which one has in the pantry.

I like to serve it in bowls, with abundant sauce which the couscous absorbs.

INGREDIENTS

- 4 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1½ pound boneless, skinless chicken thighs, (6 pieces) each cut into 4 pieces
- 1 large onion, coarsely chopped (See Note)
- 4 garlic cloves, coarsely chopped
- 2 inches ginger, finely chopped
- 2 cups chicken broth
- 14 ounces can crushed tomatoes
- ¾ cup dried apricots, quartered
- 1 small butternut squash, about 1½ pounds, (about 2 cups) peeled and cut into small pieces (See Note)
- 1 cup green olives, pitted, halved

GLAZE

- 1 generous teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper.
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 2 teaspoons ground cumin
- 2 teaspoons sweet paprika
- ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander

PREPARATION

1. In a medium bowl combine 2 tablespoons olive oil and all the ingredients for the SPICE PASTE.
2. Dry chicken with paper towels, add to the bowl and rub to coat well with the paste.
3. In a heavy medium saucepan heat the remaining oil. Add the onion and the garlic and sauté until soft, about 5 minutes.
4. Add the ginger, broth, tomatoes, apricots and squash. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat and cook covered for 10 minutes. Add the chicken, olives and lemon zest. Cook gently, covered, until both the chicken and the squash is tender, about 25 minutes.
5. Add the spinach and bring to a boil.

NOTE:

If you find it difficult to peel squash, it is available already peeled.

I chop the onions and the garlic in a food processor fitted with the steel blade.

Be sure to quarter it all first.