

A Recipe from Thomas Buckborough & Associates...

Chicken Tagine with Apricots and Almonds

I love dishes like this version of a Moroccan Tagine in the winter. They are easy to make and make a great one pot meal along with some rice or cous cous. -- Thomas

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon ground ginger
1/2 teaspoon turmeric
1/2 teaspoon black pepper
1 1/4 teaspoons salt
3 tablespoons plus 1/4 cup olive oil
1 (3-lb) chicken, cut into 6 pieces, wings and backbone discarded
1 tablespoon unsalted butter
1 medium red onion, halved, then sliced 1/4 inch thick
4 garlic cloves, finely chopped
5 fresh cilantro
5 sprigs fresh flat-leaf parsley
1 1/2 cups water
2 tablespoons mild honey
1 (3-inch) cinnamon stick
1/2 cup dried Turkish apricots, separated into halves
1/3 cup whole blanched almonds

Special equipment: a 10- to 12-inch tagine or heavy skillet; kitchen string

Stir together ground cinnamon, ginger, turmeric, pepper, 1 teaspoon salt, and 2 tablespoons oil in a large bowl. Add chicken and turn to coat well.

Heat butter and 1 tablespoon oil in base of tagine (or in a skillet), uncovered, over moderate heat until hot but not smoking, then brown half of chicken, skin sides down, turning over once, 8 to 12 minutes. Transfer to a plate. Brown remaining chicken in same manner, adding any spice mixture left in bowl.

Add onion and remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt to tagine and cook, uncovered, stirring frequently, until soft, about 8 minutes. Add garlic and cook, stirring occasionally, 3 minutes. Tie cilantro and parsley into a bundle with kitchen string and add to tagine along with 1/2 cup water, chicken, and any juices accumulated on plate. Reduce heat and simmer, covered, 30 minutes.

While chicken cooks, bring honey, remaining cup water, cinnamon stick, and apricots to a boil in a 1- to 2-quart heavy saucepan, then reduce heat and simmer, uncovered, until apricots are very tender (add more water if necessary). Once apricots are tender, simmer until liquid is reduced to a glaze, 10 to 15 minutes.

While apricots cook, heat remaining 1/4 cup oil in a small skillet over moderate heat and cook almonds, stirring occasionally, until just golden, 1 to 2 minutes. Transfer with a slotted spoon to paper towels to drain.

Ten minutes before chicken is done, add apricot mixture to tagine. Discard herbs and cinnamon stick. Serve chicken sprinkled with almonds on top.

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