

From the
Left Bank
kitchen

LAMB TAGINE with DRIED PLUMS

A tagine is a slow-cooking stew and this lamb stew recipe gets its Moroccan flavor from a blend of aromatic spices such as turmeric, cumin, ginger, cardamom and cinnamon.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 pounds (1-inch thick) lamb shoulder chops
- 1/2 tablespoon vegetable oil, plus 1/2 tablespoon
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 1/2 cups water
- Pinch saffron threads, crumbled
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 3/4 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/8 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 2/3 cup dried plums
- Freshly grated nutmeg

DIRECTIONS:

Cut lamb from bones, reserving bones, then cut meat into 1-inch pieces.

Heat 1/2 tablespoon oil in a flameproof wide shallow pot with a tight-fitting lid over moderately high heat until hot but not smoking. Brown meat on all sides in 2 batches, transferring to a plate as browned. Brown bones and transfer to plate.

Add remaining 1/2 tablespoon oil to the pot and cook onion, stirring, until softened. Return meat and bones to pot. Stir in water, saffron, salt, and pepper and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer mixture, covered, stirring occasionally, until lamb is tender, about 1 1/4 hours. Transfer the lamb to a clean plate and add any meat from lamb bones, discarding bones. Add carrots and sweet potato to pot, then simmer, covered, stirring occasionally, until vegetables are barely tender, about 10 minutes.

Add ginger and dried plums, then simmer, covered, stirring occasionally, until vegetables and fruit are tender, about 5 minutes. Season with salt, pepper, and nutmeg and cook uncovered, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes.