

Lamb Tagine With Honey, Almonds and Apricots

Recipe copied from The New York Times

Serves: 6



(Mrouzia) Ras el hanout is a Moroccan spice mixture that translates as "top of the shop." It usually includes a combination of ginger, peppercorns, cinnamon, allspice, cloves, cardamom, black cumin, aniseed, coriander, cayenne, lavender, mace, nutmeg and turmeric. It can be purchased from Middle Eastern specialty stores or Kalustyan's, 800-352-3451 or www.kalustyan.com . If you cannot find it, substitute an equal amount of Chinese fivespice powder or a mixture of spices that are available (ginger, cinnamon, allspice, cumin, coriander, etc.)

Ingredients

- 3 pounds lamb shoulder, trimmed of fat and cut into 2½" cubes
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tablespoon ras el hanout, see note above
- ¼ teaspoon saffron
- ½ cup water
- ½ cup unsalted butter
- 2 medium onions, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 6 cups chicken broth
- 2 cups dried apricots, roughly chopped, or raisins
- 1½ cups almonds, whole and blanched
- ¾ cup honey
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 cup carrots
- ½ cup parsley, chopped
- hot cooked rice, couscous or potatoes, peeled, cut in ½-inch thick slices

Cooking Method

In a bowl combine the ginger, pepper, ras el hanout, saffron and water and mix well. Add the meat and rub in the paste, coating evenly. Cover and refrigerate overnight.

In a Dutch oven or other heavy, lidded pot, melt the butter over medium heat. Add the onions, garlic, and cinnamon sticks and cook until the onions are translucent and the mixture is fragrant.

Add the marinated meat to the pot and then the chicken stock to cover the meat. Bring the stock to a boil, and skim off any scum that appears.

Reduce the heat to low, cover and simmer, stirring from time to time. Add water if the pot becomes too dry. Stew until the meat is tender, about 1½ hours.

Add the apricots, almonds, honey, carrots, and ground cinnamon and simmer, covered, stirring often to prevent scorching, until the meat is very soft and almost falling apart, about 30 minutes longer. (If it is too soupy, uncover and simmer to reduce the sauce to a syrupy glaze.)

Stir in the chopped parsley and transfer to a warmed serving dish. Serve immediately with couscous, rice or potatoes.