

Aubergine, freekeh and cashew tagine

By Michelin-starred chef, Marcus Wareing



Ingredients

Tagine

- 100g of cashew nuts
- 200g of freekeh
- 6 tbsp of vegetable oil
- 2 large onions, finely chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, crushed
- 1 knob of fresh ginger, 2cm long, grated
- 2 tbsp of tomato purée
- 400ml of passata, or a 400g tin of chopped tomatoes
- 250ml of vegetable stock
- 1 tbsp of sherry vinegar
- 1 tsp black treacle
- 50g of currants
- 2 tsp saffron strands, soaked in 1 tbsp of warm water for 10 minutes
- 2 aubergines, cut into 2cm dice
- 1 bunch of coriander, chopped
- sea salt
- freshly ground black pepper

Spice Mix

- 2 tbsp of cumin seeds
- 1 tbsp of fennel seeds
- 1 tbsp of yellow mustard seeds
- 1 tsp coriander seeds
- 1 tsp ground turmeric
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp sweet smoked paprika
- 2 tbsp of plain flour
- 1/2 tsp table salt

Method

- 1 Preheat the oven to 200°C/gas mark 6
- 2 Place the cashew nuts on a roasting tray and bake for 6–10 minutes until golden. Remove, leave to cool, then chop roughly. Reduce the oven temperature to 160°C/gas mark 3
- 3 Cook the freekeh for half of the time stated on the packet instructions, then drain
- 4 Heat 2 tablespoons of the vegetable oil in a large casserole dish over medium heat. Add the onions, season with sea salt and pepper and sauté for about 10 minutes until they are soft but not coloured. Add the garlic and ginger for the last 3–4 minutes, then add the tomato purée, the passata or chopped tomatoes, stock, vinegar, treacle, currants and saffron to the casserole and remove from the heat
- 5 Heat a dry large frying pan over high heat and, when hot, add the spices for the spice mix and stir them for 3–4 minutes until fragrant. Transfer the spices to a mortar and crush with the pestle. Mix with the flour and table salt in a bowl
- 6 Add 2 tablespoons of vegetable oil to the frying pan and place back on the heat. Season the diced aubergine generously with the spiced flour and fry it in the oil, in batches, until golden, adding more oil with each batch as necessary
- 7 Add half of the chopped coriander to the casserole and mix well. Add the part-cooked freekeh and the spiced aubergine. Sprinkle with three-quarters of the cashew nuts
- 8 Bring to the boil, cover with a lid and transfer to the oven for around 1 hour until the freekeh is tender and the sauce thickened. Serve sprinkled with the remaining coriander and cashew nuts

Recipe courtesy of Tredwell's from Marcus Wareing