

Warming Winter Squash Tagine

By allyeats

A tagine is both a Moroccan dish and the vessel in which it is cooked. I don't own a tagine, but I love to make tagine, nonetheless. This dish provides substance, spice, and warmth for very little money and not a great deal of effort. Plus, it tastes even better when made ahead of time. The results are a delicious showstopper, ready for a feast to celebrate any occasion.

Serves 6

- 1/4 cup olive oil, divided
- 1 large red onion, diced
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 medium winter squash (such as butternut or kabocha), chopped into 1-inch pieces
- 1 can chick peas, drained
- 1 handful dried apricots, minced
- 1 1/2 cup couscous
- 1/3 cup roasted almonds, roughly chopped
- 1 cup Italian parsley, chopped

1. Heat 3 Tablespoons of olive oil in a large pan with a well-fitted lid (or a tagine, if you have one!) over medium heat. Add the onion and garlic and saute until soft but not browned, about five minutes. Add the spices and stir until they are fragrant -- they should really be swoon-worthy.
2. Add the squash and stir all the vegetables together to coat them in the spices. Add the chick peas, apricots, and enough water to come almost to the top of the vegetables. Bring to a boil, then simmer for about 20-30 minutes, as long as it takes for the squash to be squashable with a wooden spoon but not so long that everything is falling apart. Add salt to taste.
3. While the tagine is simmering away, preheat your oven to 400 degrees. Spread the couscous out in a shallow baking dish. Cover with boiling water and let sit for five minutes, until the couscous soaks up all the liquid. With a fork, stir in some salt to taste, plus the chopped almonds and the remaining 1 Tablespoon of olive oil. Put the dish in the oven to warm through and get a little brown and irresistibly crunchy on top.
4. Once the couscous and tagine are ready, dish up, top with chopped parsley, and present to your adoring friends

