

CHEERS

tops!



MOROCCAN-INSPIRED CHICKEN CASSEROLE

INGREDIENTS:

- 12 chicken thighs (deboned, skin-on)
- 4 Tbsp Moroccan spice paste, (see page 170)
- Flour, for dusting
- 4 Tbsp olive oil
- 2 Tbsp Moroccan spice blend, (see page 170)
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 500 ml chicken stock
- 1 can (400 g) tomato puree
- 1 can (400 g) lentils, drained
- 200 g dried apricots, chopped
- ½ preserved lemon (2 segments), finely sliced
- Fresh parsley, finely chopped
- 200 g blanched almonds, for serving
- Fresh coriander or parsley, for serving

METHOD

Serves 4

1. Place the chicken thighs in a resealable bag together with the spice paste and massage the paste into the meat until well coated. (Doing it this way prevents the turmeric in the paste from turning your fingers yellow!) Place the bag in the fridge for at

least 3–4 hours, or overnight. Remove the chicken from the marinade an hour or so before cooking, to come to room temperature.

2. Lightly dust the chicken with flour (this helps to retain the flavour). Heat the oil in a large pan or wok and add the spice blend, stirring until the oil is warm but not smoking. You want the fragrance before adding the meat. Add the chicken and cook, turning frequently, until both sides are lightly browned (don't let it burn). Once browned, place the chicken into the slow cooker or an ovenproof casserole dish. If cooking in a pan or wok, set the chicken aside.

3. Add the chopped onion to the pan and fry until soft. Deglaze the pan with the chicken stock, then stir in the tomato puree before pouring the contents of the pan over the chicken. (If cooking on the stovetop, return the chicken to the pan.)

4. Set the slow cooker to auto and cook the chicken for at least 4 hours, but no longer than 6 hours. For oven cooking, place in a preheated oven at 150°C for a total of 4 hours. For stovetop cooking, or cover the wok or pan with a lid and lower the heat to a gentle simmer.

5. After about 3 hours, add the drained lentils, dried apricots, preserved lemon and some chopped parsley. Stir through and continue cooking for 1 hour. When ready to serve, garnish with blanched almonds and fresh coriander or parsley leaves.