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DUBA WOT

KABOCHA SQUASH STEW

INGREDIENTS

500 gram Kabocha squash or any other firm squash
3 medium sized finely chopped red onions
3 medium sized tomatoes or a tin of plum tomatoes
2 cloves of freshly minced garlic
A thumb of freshly grated ginger
6 tablespoons of cold-pressed rapeseed oil
<i>[or any healthy choice oil with high smoking point and doesn't have an overwhelming flavour]</i>
4 to 6 tablespoons of authentic Berbere spice
<i>[depending on your spice tolerance]</i>
Sea salt

OPTIONAL

Soft Ethiopian cheese 'Ayib'
A pinch of Tikur Azmud (ground Nigella seed)
A pinch of Nech Azmud (ground Ajowan/Ethiopian caraway seed)
A pinch of 'Korerima' Ethiopian cardamom



Serves 4	[as a main]
Preparation time:	10 mins
Cooking time:	60 mins [approx]

1. First, boil a kettle (you will need a splash of hot water during the cooking process).
2. In a sauce pan boil the tomatoes for about 10 minutes until the skin becomes loose, meanwhile peel and finely chop the red onions.
3. In another saucepan add the oil and once warm add the onions, cook the onions on a medium heat for around 5 minutes and add garlic and ginger.
4. Take out the boiled tomatoes and cool them in cold water before removing the skin and chopping them finely or alternatively you can blend them until smooth in a blender.
5. Once the onions have reduced down and soften add the chopped tomatoes and cook for 5 minutes.
6. Add the Berbere spice and then the 'Tikur Azmud' and 'Nech Azmud' (if using) and cook for about 30 minutes stirring and adding a splash of hot water to prevent from burning.
7. While the kulet (the Berbere and onion sauce) is cooking, preheat an oven to 200 degrees to roast the squash before adding it to the sauce. I like the complex flavour roasting gives the dish but you can just add it to the sauce without roasting if you wish.

8. Rinse the squash under running water and dry it. Remove the stem of Kabocha using a big spoon and slice the squash in half by using a sharp knife. Scoop out the pulp and seeds and save the seeds if you want to roast them. Slice the Kabocha into thin wedges. I keep the skin on as it's edible and a great source of fibre but you can remove it if you desire.
9. Place the slices in a large baking tray as a single layer, and sprinkle them with salt and pepper. Drizzle over some olive oil and roast for 20 mins. Turn them over half way through.
10. The kulet should be a smooth paste-like texture by now, add 300ml of hot water to thin it and simmer for 5 mins.
11. Add the roasted squash gently to the kulet without breaking them too much and simmer on a low heat for 10 mins.
12. While that's simmering break the Korerima pod (if you're using) in a pestle and mortar and take out the seeds. Toast the seeds for a few minutes in a frying pan and then grind them in a spice grinder or with the pestle and mortar.
13. Season with salt and add a pinch of the Korerima.

Tip: Traditionally served on Ethiopian Teff Injera but it's also delicious with brown or multigrain rice.

Optional: Serve with Ethiopian soft cheese 'Ayib', ricotta or yogurt to cool down the spice or for a vegan version we have an umami filled savoury paste called Siljo in Ethiopia (a fermented Fava Bean paste).

Background

Duba Wot is an Ethiopian pumpkin dish, and often eaten alongside other vegetarian dishes. There are a variety of vegetarian and vegan dishes in Ethiopia due to fasting seasons (when Ethiopian Orthodox Christians give up meat and dairy products). Fasting takes place throughout the long Easter lent (55 days) and at Christmas (43 days) as well as most Wednesdays and Fridays throughout the year.

Growing up I don't remember my Mum cooking Duba Wot very often, maybe I ate it a handful of times, which is strange as my Mum likes to cook a variety of Ethiopian dishes. Maybe she wasn't a big fan, I certainly didn't have a huge love for it back then.

But in recent years I have found myself exploring this dish, there is such a huge selection of squash available this time of year, and such diversity, all with different characteristics, it's a shame not to. I have completely changed my mind, this is a gloriously complex dish!

I've experimented with a whole range of squash for this dish and at last I've found my favourite, Kabocha squash. Originating from Japan, this squash perfectly compliments the bold flavours of Ethiopian Berbere spice. It's firm, buttery and nutritious, and soaks up the kulet (Berbere and onion sauce) so well.

The spice

Berbere spice blend is at the heart of this dish which is native to Ethiopia and also used in Eritrea.

Berbere spice is made up of around 20 different spices and herbs some of which can only be found in Ethiopia. I'm lucky enough to be able to use my Mum's home-made blend, which she makes for me in Ethiopia.

For this recipe, I suggest reaching out to Ethiopian mini markets where you live, if you are in a major city in the U.S or Europe this shouldn't be a problem.

There are many online adapted Berbere recipes to be found, but they simply won't taste anything like the real thing no matter what people say. Similarly you might find Berbere on the shelves of some major western supermarkets but unfortunately again in our experience they just don't taste like they should.

We hope to be able to make our own spices accessible soon.