



Ingredients

Serves 4

- 1 preserved lemon, rinsed
- 2 garlic cloves, peeled and coarsely chopped
- 2cm piece of fresh ginger, peeled and coarsely chopped
- 1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/4 teaspoon turmeric
- 4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 8 free-range chicken thighs
- 1 large onion, peeled and cut up
- a pinch of saffron filaments (approx.20), ground and blended with 1 tablespoon boiling water
- sea salt, black pepper
- 75g green olives, pitted
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- chopped fresh coriander to serve

Gorgeous Suppers

Chicken tagine with preserved lemons and olives

Just the mention of preserved lemons and olives in a chicken tagine sets the mouth watering. This is a slightly unusual take on this classic, in that the chicken is first marinated and poached, then roasted at the end in a hot oven to colour it, so you get the best of both worlds. Warm flatbreads or a fluffy mound of couscous are the order of the day here.

Quarter the preserved lemon, remove the pulp from the skin and purée this in a food processor with the garlic, fresh ginger, ground ginger, turmeric and 2 tablespoons of the oil. Coat the chicken thighs with this paste, cover and chill, ideally overnight but at least for a couple of hours. Reserve some lemon skin.

Preheat the oven to 200°C fan/220°C/gas mark 7. Place the onion in a food processor and reduce to a pulp (you could also grate it by hand, but only at the risk of a stream of tears). Put the chicken into a cast-iron casserole with the grated onion, the saffron, and some salt and pepper. Pour over 150ml of water, and give everything a good stir. Bring to a simmer, then cover and braise over a low heat for 15 minutes.

Transfer the chicken pieces to a baking tray, skin side up. Drizzle over the remaining 2 tablespoons of oil and place the tray in the oven for 20 minutes until the chicken is lightly golden. At the same time, skim any excess fat off the juices in the casserole. Add the olives and the lemon juice and simmer the sauce for a few minutes to reduce and thicken it. Taste to check the seasoning. Serve the chicken in warm shallow bowls with the sauce spooned over, scattered with coriander and a piece or two of lemon skin.



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