

African Chicken and Root Vegetables

Tonight we'll revisit the vivid flavors of African Chicken and Root Vegetables. I use plant-based Chick'n for this meal. Feel free to substituted chicken if you have meat eaters to cook for.

The African spice mix, with its combination of toasted cumin, coriander, caraway and garlic provides a bold flavor package to anchor this meal. A yogurt/mint sauce cools the spicy meat while the root vegetables are draped in a citrus marinara sauce. (You should have leftover marinara sauce in the fridge.) I think you'll like the flavor combinations.

Preparation time: 55 minutes - Servings: 2

Organize Your Ingredients!

Notes on Organizing

Prep and organize ingredients on small plates so they are easy to add. There are two different onion preps: 1/2 of a large sweet onion, peeled and quartered for the Roasted Root Vegetables and 1 T. finely-chopped red onion for the salad. Prep 2 cloves chopped garlic: 1 for the Yogurt Sauce and 1 for the Ethiopian Green Salad.

Roasted Root Vegetables

1 large rutabaga (peeled, and cut into 1-1/2 " pieces)
2 medium golden potatoes (scrubbed and halved)
2 medium red or purple potatoes (scrubbed and halved)
2 tsp. olive oil

1 medium sweet potato
1/2 large sweet onion (peeled, quartered)

Citrus Marinara Sauce

1-1/2 C. marinara sauce (leftovers)
2 T. lemon juice

Yogurt Sauce

2/3 C. plain, nonfat yogurt
1 small clove garlic (smashed and chopped)
1 T. fresh mint (finely chopped)
1 T. lemon juice
1 T. olive oil

African Chick'n

African Spice Mix:

1/2 tsp. coriander seeds
1/2 tsp. cumin seeds
1/2 tsp. caraway seeds
1/4 tsp. red pepper flakes

1/2 tsp. garlic powder
1/4 tsp. sea salt
1/2 tsp. sugar

African Chick'n:

1 tsp. olive oil
20 pieces Morningstar Chick'n Strips
1/2 C. white wine
spice mix from above

Ethiopian Green Salad

Dressing:

2 tsp. lemon juice
1 T. olive oil
1 T. red onions (finely-chopped)
1 small clove garlic (smashed and chopped)
1 T. Jalapeño pepper (finely-chopped)
1/4 tsp. salt and pepper

Salad

2 C. Romaine lettuce (chopped)
1/3 C. fresh tomatoes (chopped)

Let's Prepare, Cook, and Plate This!

Preheat oven to 375°.

Basic Assembly Instructions

Make African Spice Mix. Toast coriander, cumin, and caraway seeds in a dry sauté pan over medium heat until they begin to pop and brown. Remove from heat and add the pepper flakes to the pan. Toss well. Allow to cool a bit and grind in a spice grinder with garlic powder, salt and sugar.

Roasted Root Vegetables

1. Drop rutabaga pieces into 2 C. boiling water. Boil for 8 minutes. Drain water and transfer to a medium-size bowl.
2. Toss potato halves and par-boiled rutabaga with olive oil.
3. Place par-boiled rutabaga pieces, halved potatoes, whole sweet potato and prepped onion on an oiled cookie sheet and bake in a 375° oven for 25-30 minutes. Make sure the potatoes and rutabaga are tender. When finished roasting allow to cool a few minutes and peel skin from sweet potato.

African Chick'n

Toss frozen Chick'n pieces in a hot oiled pan until they're browned. Add white wine to pan and then sprinkle all of the spices over into pan. Toss until wine mostly cooks away. Remove pan from burner and set aside. Reheat just before serving.

Citrus Marinara Sauce

Measure marinara sauce into a bowl with lemon juice. Stir well, cover and heat 2 minutes in the microwave. Set aside.

Yogurt Sauce

Place yogurt, garlic, chopped mint, lemon juice and olive oil in a bowl and stir until well blended. Set aside.

Ethiopian Salad

Combine all dressing ingredients in a large bowl and whisk. Add lettuce and tomatoes and toss well. Divide between two salad plates.

Plate Meal

Spoon about 1/2 C. Citrus Marinara Sauce onto two dinner plates. Cut sweet potato into four equal pieces and place over the sauce. Divide potatoes, rutabagas and half of the onion pieces over sauce as well. Spoon a little more Marinara Sauce over vegetables, leaving part of each piece with no sauce. Spoon a couple of dollops of yogurt sauce onto each plate and place African Chick'n strips over the yogurt sauce. Serve salad on the side.

What I've Learned from this Recipe

Sauces can be simple affairs. Sometimes it's as easy as adding citrus to a leftover. The yogurt sauce with fresh chopped mint, garlic and lemon juice is easy to make yet cooling and satisfying. Let us know what you think, and any ask questions you may have! chezdon@plate6.com