

Moroccan Vegetable Stew

2 Tbsp olive oil
1 large onion, coarsely chopped
1" piece fresh ginger root, minced (optional)
3 garlic cloves, minced
2 tsp ground cumin
2 tsp ground turmeric
2 tsp cinnamon
1/2 to 1 tsp cayenne pepper (OR 2 minced Jalapenos)
1 tsp salt
1 cup sliced carrots
4 cups cubed sweet potatoes, butternut or kubocho squash
2 large tomatoes, diced
1- 2 cups of water, vegetable broth or tomato juice added gradually as needed to cook veggies
4 cups cubed eggplant (no need to peel)
3 cups sliced zucchini, yellow squash or cauliflower
1-2 red or green bell peppers, cut in strips
1 ½ cups cooked chick peas
½ cup golden raisins
¼ cup chopped fresh parsley or cilantro for garnish

In a large Dutch oven or other heavy stew pot, heat olive oil and sauté the onions for 2-3 minutes. Add the ginger, garlic and spices, stirring constantly for 30 seconds. Add the starchier vegetables first (carrots & winter squash) with the diced tomatoes plus enough liquid to simmer them. Cover & cook for 10 minutes. Add the remaining vegetables, cover and simmer until tender, approximately 10-15 minutes. Stir in raisins. (If you don't like raisins, and add a tablespoon or two of sugar instead.)

Serve hot with couscous, quinoa or brown rice. Garnish with fresh chopped parsley or cilantro if desired.

Tip for making really flavorful brown rice: Coat 1 ½ cups of dry rice with 2 tsp of oil before adding 3 cups water. (This keeps your rice from getting gummy.) Add salt, 2 tsp of cumin seed and a cinnamon stick. Simmer for 1 hour.