

## **Vegetable tagine with spelt bejewelled couscous**

Serves 4 generously, takes 1.5 hours

This is a cosy, warming and lightly spiced tagine. It's pretty to serve for a dinner party and is thoroughly satisfying, despite being vegetarian. Spelt couscous is my new love - as easy and quick to make as regular couscous, but nuttier tasting and more nutritious. Win win.

If you're in a rush, you could get away with making this in 40 minutes. I leave the stock to simmer for 45 minutes before adding the vegetables as this gives the spices more time to infuse, but you could skip this step. Or make the quick version of the dish in advance, which would do the infusing for you. Magic.

- \* Onion - 1, peeled and roughly diced
- \* Olive oil - a generous glug
- \* Ras el Hanout - 2 heaped tsp
- \* Cumin seeds - 1 tsp
- \* Ground coriander - 1 tsp
- \* Cardamom pods - 2
- \* Garlic - 2 cloves, peeled and sliced
- \* Vegetable stock - 1 L (unsalted if cooking for a babe)
- \* Carrots - 8 large, roughly chopped
- \* Parsnips - 4 large, roughly chopped
- \* Chickpeas - 1 small tin
- \* Honey - 1 tsp (to be added after babe's portion is removed)
- \* Salt - 2 tsp (ditto, if using unsalted stock)
- \* Spelt couscous - 2 cups
- \* Coriander - a handful, chopped
- \* Pomegranate - 1/2, seeds removed

Fry the onion and all the spices on a medium heat until the onion softens.

Add the garlic and cook for a couple of minutes.

Add the vegetable stock plus an extra 500ml of water and simmer for about 45 minutes (skip this step if you're in a rush OR if you're making the tagine in advance).

Add the vegetables and simmer for about 30 minutes, until the vegetables are completely tender.

If you are cooking with a babe in mind, remove their portion now.

Add the salt (if you've used unsalted stock) and honey and stir to combine.

Now make the couscous. Place the couscous in a bowl and add 2 cups boiling water (you should add the same volume of liquid as couscous). Cover with a clean tea towel and leave to steam for five minutes.

Meanwhile chop the coriander and remove the seeds from the pomegranate.

Add a knob of butter or a glug of olive oil to the couscous and break up the grains with a fork.

Serve the tagine in a bowl over the couscous, with the coriander and pomegranate seeds as garnish.