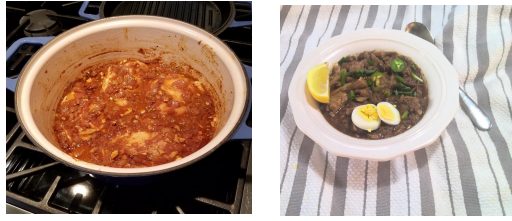


DORO WAT - Ethiopian Chicken Stew



Doro wat is a succulent chicken stew, savory-sweet, with chicken thighs braised in a thick liquid of well-cooked red onions, water and an ample amount of berbere. This stew is often spoken of as the national dish of Ethiopia. The packet of berbere that comes with this is enough for two recipes of this stew, or only one if you are brave.

You are going to start with 2 pounds of chopped red onions sauteed for 15 minutes in ghee or butter. Wear one of those face masks you have lying around while you chop the onions, since it helps to allay the tears. It's not a perfect solution, but it's at least as good as swimming goggles.

If ghee is not available, butter works fine. Dress the finished dish with whole hard-cooked eggs slipped into the stew at the very end and broken up with the serving spoon so everyone gets some in their stew, or slice the eggs and lay on top of the individual serving bowls. Top each bowl with green onion (scallions) and thinly sliced chilies. I usually use jalapenos, but any spicy fresh pepper will work. Naan is a good accompaniment. Once I served it with maple flavored Japanese milk bread, sliced about a half inch thick and toasted in an iron skillet, then cut into four pieces on the diagonal. It was a wonderful counterpoint to the hot spicy stew. Traditionally, in Ethiopia injera is the bread of choice, but you are not going to find that in your local supermarkets. Maybe a recipe for another day.

A word of warning that I ignored the first time I made this: The onion and spice mixture looks too thick after the chicken is stirred in (so of course I added some water). However, as it cooks the chicken gradually releases moisture—so much so that the stew will require uncovered simmering at the end to reduce and thicken the liquid. If you don't want a soupy stew, use just the water called for in the recipe.

Ingredients:

- 5 T. ghee, divided
- 2 lbs. (about 3 large) red onions, finely chopped
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- ½ to 1 packet of berbere (full packet is a third cup)
- 10 medium garlic cloves, minced
- 2½ lbs. skin-on bone-in chicken thighs (If using skinless boneless, use 2 lbs.)
- 3 scallions, thinly sliced on the diagonal
- 1 jalapeno or Fresno chili, stemmed and seeded, thinly sliced
- 2 to 3 peeled hard-cooked eggs put in whole during last five minutes or sliced as topping (optional)

Directions:

In a large Dutch oven over medium-high heat, melt 2 T of ghee until shimmering. Add the onions and ½ tsp. salt. Cook stirring occasionally. Reduce the heat if the onions begin to brown too soon. It will take 10 to 15 minutes to cook, brown just a bit, and reduce the onions. They should be completely softened.

Stir in the remaining 3 T. of ghee, the berbere and ¾ C. water, then the garlic followed by the chicken. Reduce to medium-low, cover and cook at a simmer, stirring occasionally, until a skewer inserted into the chicken meets no resistance, about 30 minutes. Uncover, increase to medium-high and cook, stirring and scraping along the bottom of the pot, until the stew is thickened and a wooden spoon leaves a brief trail when drawn through the sauce, 5 to 8 minutes. Taste and season with salt and pepper. Remove the thighs from the stew, get rid of the skin and bones and put chicken meat back into the stew to serve. Top each bowl with the scallions, chilies and sliced eggs if using; serve with lemon or lime wedges on the side.

Adapted by Ceres & Co. May 2, 2022