

Dear EC Friends,

Below is the recipe for a wonderful dish for cool (not to mention cold) weather. It's colorful, nutritious, and full of warm spices and flavors. I can easily imagine our gathering in EC's newly renovated kitchen to explore the cuisine of communities around the world, especially Jewish ones, perhaps even inviting guest chefs to share their wisdom. Kitchens are alchemical chambers in which surprising and delicious transformations can occur on an everyday basis. I celebrate the coming of EC's kitchen transformations. Please join me in supporting the kitchen renovation.

Warmly, Suzi Naiburg

SPICED CHICKPEA STEW WITH COCONUT AND TURMERIC

Adapted from Alison Roman, New York Times

- Yield 4 to 6 servings
- Time 55 minutes

Spiced chickpeas are crisped in olive oil, then simmered in a garlicky coconut milk for an insanely creamy, basically-good-for-you stew. While the chickpeas would be good as a side dish, they are further simmered with stock, bolstered with dark, leafy greens of your choosing and finished with a handful of fresh mint. When shopping, be sure to avoid low-fat coconut milk, coconut milk meant for drinking or cream of coconut: All are very different and would not be suitable here.

Ingredients

- ¼ cup olive oil, plus more for serving
- 1 large yellow onion, chopped
- 4 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 (2-inch) piece ginger, finely chopped
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 1 ½ teaspoons ground turmeric, plus more for serving
- 1 teaspoon red-pepper flakes, plus more for serving
- 2 (15-ounce) cans chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 2 (15-ounce) cans full-fat coconut milk



- 2 cups vegetable or chicken stock
- 1 bunch Swiss chard, kale or collard greens, stems removed, torn into bite-size pieces
- 1 lime, cut into wedges, for serving
- 1 cup mint leaves, for serving
- Yogurt, full fat, for serving (optional)
- Toasted pita, lavash or other flatbread, for serving (optional)

Preparation

1. Heat oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add onion, season with salt and pepper and cook, stirring occasionally until onion is almost translucent. Add garlic and ginger and continue cooking until fragrant and onion starts to brown a little around the edges, 5 to 7 minutes.
2. Add turmeric, red-pepper flakes and chickpeas, and season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring frequently, so the chickpeas sizzle and fry a bit in the spices and oil, until they've started to break down and get a little browned and crisp, 8 to 10 minutes. Remove about a cup of chickpeas and set aside for garnish.
3. Using a wooden spoon or spatula, further crush the remaining chickpeas slightly to release their starchy insides (this will help thicken the stew). Add coconut milk and stock to the pot, and season with salt and pepper. Bring to a simmer, scraping up any bits that have formed on the bottom of the pot. Cook, stirring occasionally, until stew has thickened and flavors have started to come together, 30 to 35 minutes. (Taste a chickpea or two, not just the liquid, to make sure they have simmered long enough to taste as delicious as possible.) If after 30 to 35 minutes you want the stew a bit thicker, keep simmering until you've reached your desired consistency. Determining perfect stew thickness is a personal journey!
4. Add greens and stir, making sure they're submerged in the liquid. Cook a few minutes so they wilt and soften, 3 to 7 minutes, depending on what you're using. (Swiss chard and spinach will wilt and soften much faster than kale or collard greens.) Season again with salt and pepper.
5. Divide among bowls and top with mint, reserved chickpeas, a sprinkle of red-pepper flakes and a good drizzle of olive oil. Serve alongside yogurt and toasted pita if using; dust the yogurt with turmeric if you'd like.

Steve notes:

I sometimes add 1 jalapeno, finely chopped, to the garlic and ginger and cut back on the red pepper flakes.

I often add a second bunch of Swiss chard.

The stew usually cooks for 45-50 minutes to get to consistency I like before adding greens.

Use the yogurt topping, and I sometimes microplane some garlic into it to make a garlicky yogurt for topping, seasoning with a little salt.

I sometimes use cilantro instead of or in addition to mint as a topping.

The stew often benefits from an ingredient to brighten. I usually add some lime juice just before serving.

I serve over rice.