

Recipes: Southern comfort food, African-style

Lucy Waverman, Friday, Jun. 11, 2010

BOBOTIE

A fusion – like much of South Africa's cooking – of spices and styles, bobotie is the country's signature dish, fiery, sweet and tart all at once. It is always served with yellow rice (the recipe for which is below) and is often made with lamb, not beef.

Ingredients

2 tablespoons vegetable oil	½ cup raisins
2 cups chopped onions	2 tablespoons white vinegar
1 tablespoon ground ginger	1 tablespoon apricot jam or orange marmalade
1 tablespoon brown sugar	2 tablespoons tomato paste
1 tablespoon curry powder or 1 tablespoon Indian curry paste	Topping:
1 tablespoon turmeric	1½ cups milk
Salt and freshly ground pepper	2 eggs
1½ pounds (750 grams) ground beef	Pinch salt
2 slices white bread soaked in milk, squeezed dry and crumbled	1 teaspoon grated lemon rind
2 tablespoons mango chutney	

Method

Preheat oven to 350 F. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add onions and sauté until softened (about 3 minutes). Add ginger, sugar, curry paste and turmeric and cook until fragrant (about 1 minute). Add ground beef and sauté for 2 minutes or until it starts to lose its pinkness. Add crumbled bread, chutney, raisins, vinegar, apricot jam and tomato paste and season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring, for 5 to 7 minutes or until flavours have come together. Season with salt and pepper to taste and transfer to a greased ovenproof casserole.

Beat together eggs, milk, salt and grated lemon rind and pour over meat mixture. Bake for 45 minutes or until top is set. Serves 6.

YELLOW RICE

The main ingredient in yellow rice is turmeric, one of the healthiest spices.

Ingredients

1½ cups water	2 pieces cinnamon stick
1 cup long-grain rice, preferably Thai scented or basmati	½ cup raisins
1 teaspoon turmeric	Salt to taste

Method

Combine water, rice, turmeric and cinnamon sticks in a pot and bring to boil over high heat. Turn heat to low, stir in raisins, cover and simmer for 12 to 15 minutes or until rice is tender. Season with salt to taste. Serves 4 to 6.

MALVA PUDDING

This pudding is the essential dessert of South Africa. It has the texture of a sticky toffee pudding and was traditionally eaten with Madeira, the sweet fortified wine from which it gets its name. Do not soak or store the pudding covered, as it'll become too sticky.

Ingredients

Batter:	1 teaspoon salt
1 cup milk	1 large egg
1 cup sugar	Sauce:
1 tablespoon apricot jam	½ cup milk
1 tablespoon butter	½ cup whipping cream
1 tablespoon baking soda	¼ cup butter
1 tablespoon white vinegar	1/3 cup sugar
1 cup all-purpose flour	½ teaspoon vanilla

Method

Preheat oven to 350 F. Butter an ovenproof baking dish that will hold 6 cups.

Combine milk, sugar, jam and butter in a large pot over medium-high heat. Bring to a boil and don't worry if it looks curdled. Whisk in the baking soda – the mixture will foam way up – then add vinegar and remove from heat. Whisk in flour and salt until combined.

Beat egg in a large bowl and slowly add the hot batter, whisking until uniform. Pour batter into prepared baking dish and cover loosely with a piece of buttered foil. Bake for 35 to 45 minutes or until browned and set.

While pudding is baking, combine milk, whipping cream, butter, sugar and vanilla in a pot over medium-high heat and bring to a boil. Boil for 2 minutes to combine flavours. When pudding comes out of the oven, use a skewer to prick holes all over the surface and pour about 1/3 of sauce over top. Allow it to sink in, then continue adding sauce until pudding is saturated. Serve it with any remaining sauce. Serves 6 to 8.