

Khoresh de Karafs (Celery Stew)



INGREDIENTS

1. 1 pound boneless, skinless chicken breast, lamb, or beef, cut into 1/2-inch squares
2. 2 cups celery stalk, cut into 1/2- to 3/4-inch pieces
3. 1 cup dried parsley
4. 1/2 medium onion, chopped
5. 2 teaspoons tomato paste
6. 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
7. 2 ^{1/2} tablespoons dried mint
8. 2 tablespoons dried lemon powder, or 1/3 cup lemon juice
9. 1 tablespoon salt
10. 1 teaspoon turmeric
11. 1/2 teaspoon pepper
12. 4 cups water

Method:

1. In large pot, brown the onion in 1 tablespoon of vegetable oil over medium to high heat. Add chicken squares, and brown.
2. When the chicken has lost its pink color, add turmeric, salt, pepper, dried lemon, and 2 cups water, or enough water to barely cover the chicken. Bring the chicken to a mild boil.
3. Add tomato paste and reduce the heat to low. Cover the chicken and cook while stirring occasionally. Add more water if the liquid from the stew doesn't cover at least half of the meat. Let simmer for 40 minutes.

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4. In a frying pan, brown the celery in 2 tablespoons vegetable oil. Keep the heat on high until the oil is hot. Afterwards, turn the heat down to medium and stir often. When the celery is a little browned, remove it with a slotted spoon and add directly to the chicken stew.
5. Immediately add parsley and mint to frying pan and sauté over medium heat. If needed, add a bit of vegetable oil to keep moist. Stir constantly until the herbs seem almost burnt. Then add the herb mixture to the stew. They should sizzle when added to the stew.
6. Add approximately 2 cups water and bring to a boil. The water should almost, but not quite, cover the chicken and celery. Add more lemon, salt, or pepper if needed.
7. Cook for approximately 30 minutes after adding herb mixture.