

Chicken Yassa (Senegal)

Makes 4 Servings

Preparation: 30 minutes, Cook Time: 1 hour 15 minutes

Linda T raved about this. A flavorful Senegalese dish featuring braised chicken marinated in lemon juice, mustard, and oil, then seared and simmered with caramelized onions, garlic, and habanero in a tangy sauce, served over rice. Adapted a little from ATK.



1/3 cup plus 2 tablespoons lemon juice (3 lemons), divided, plus lemon wedges for serving
3 1/2 tablespoons vegetable oil, divided
2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
1 1/2 teaspoons table salt, divided
2 pounds bone-in chicken thighs, trimmed, or use a spatchcocked whole chicken
2 pounds onions, halved and sliced thin
1 1/3 cups low-sodium chicken broth

8 garlic cloves, lightly crushed and peeled
1 small Habanero pepper, left in one piece (or use half)
1/4 teaspoon pepper
1 tablespoon cornstarch, mixed with 1 T water
1/3 cup Castelvetrano olives, halved
4 1/2 cups cooked long-grain white rice
1 1/2 teaspoons minced fresh parsley
lemon wedges for garnish

1. Whisk $\frac{1}{3}$ cup lemon juice, $1\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoons oil, mustard, and 1 teaspoon salt together in a large bowl. Add chicken and toss to coat. Cover and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes or up to 1 hour.
 2. Heat remaining 2 tablespoons oil in a large Dutch oven over medium heat until shimmering. Using tongs, remove chicken from marinade and drag pieces against the rim of the bowl to scrape excess marinade back into the bowl (this is difficult with a spatchcocked chicken - do your best); do not discard marinade. Transfer chicken to the pot, skin side down, and cook until skin is golden brown, 6 to 8 minutes. Flip chicken and brown on the second side, 6 to 8 minutes. Transfer chicken to a large plate.
 3. Add onions and remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt to the pot; reduce heat to medium-low; and cook, stirring frequently and scraping browned bits from the bottom of the pot, until onions are softened and caramelized, 25 to 30 minutes.
 4. Stir in broth, garlic, habanero, pepper, and reserved marinade and bring to a simmer. Return chicken and any accumulated juices to the pot. Add the Castelvetrano olives. Cover and simmer, stirring occasionally, until the sauce has thickened to the consistency of heavy cream and chicken is very tender (meat should begin to fall from the bone and a fork will slip easily in and out of the meat), 45 to 55 minutes. If desired, thicken the gravy with a cornstarch slurry (1 T cornstarch with 1 T water, mixed well, then added to the liquid in the pan and mixed in. Stir in the extra 2 T lemon juice into the sauce and season with S&P as needed. REMOVE and discard the habanero pepper from the pot.
 5. Spread rice on a large platter or put it at one end. Arrange chicken on top or next to the rice.
 6. Spoon sauce and onions over and around the chicken and rice. Sprinkle with parsley and serve with lemon wedges.
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