



Magical Moroccan Vegetable Jewel Stew in a Mug + Crispy Couscous

By Erin Fletter

Prep Time 10 / **Cook Time** 5 / **Serves** 1 - 2

Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

chop: to cut something into small, rough pieces using a blade.

microwave: to heat or cook food or liquid quickly in a microwave oven, which uses high-frequency electromagnetic waves to generate heat in the food's water molecules.

season: to add flavor to food with spices, herbs, and salt.

Equipment

- Microwave
- Microwave-safe mug
- Microwave-safe plate
- Blender (or pitcher + immersion blender)
- Liquid measuring cup
- Measuring spoons
- Metal spoon
- Can opener
- Potheader
- Paper towels
- Cutting board and kid-safe knife (butter knife works great)
- Soap for cleaning hands

Ingredients

Magical Moroccan Vegetable Jewel Stew in a Mug + Crispy Couscous

- 2 T dried couscous ******(for GLUTEN ALLERGY sub gluten-free/nut-free bread)******
- 3 T water
- 2 1/2 tsp olive oil, divided
- 1/4 to 1/2 small zucchini (about 1/2 C diced)
- 1 green onion
- 1/2 red bell pepper or 3 mini sweet peppers
- 3 to 4 baby carrots
- 5 to 6 grape or cherry tomatoes, or 1 plum tomato
- 2 to 3 dried apricots or 1 T raisins (or a mix!)
- 1/4 tsp salt, divided
- 1/8 tsp garlic powder
- 1/8 tsp ground cumin
- 1/8 tsp ground coriander
- 1/8 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/2 C water
- 1 tsp all-purpose flour ******(for GLUTEN ALLERGY sub gluten-free/nut-free all-purpose flour)******
- 1/4 C canned drained chickpeas ******(for LEGUME/CHICKPEA ALLERGY sub frozen and thawed corn or canned and drained corn)******

Food Allergen Substitutions

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Gluten/Wheat: Substitute gluten-free/nut-free bread for couscous. Substitute gluten-free/nut-free all-purpose flour.

Legumes: Substitute 1/4 C frozen and thawed corn or canned and drained corn for chickpeas.

Instructions

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intro

We'll be making the Crispy Couscous first! North African couscous are semolina granules made from crushed durum wheat (pasta is made with ground durum wheat).

measure + add + microwave

Measure and add **2 tablespoons dried couscous** and **3 tablespoons water** to your mug. Cover with a damp paper towel and microwave for 1 minute. Let stand for 1 minute and remove the mug from the microwave with a potholder.

stir in + spread + microwave

Stir in **1 1/2 teaspoons olive oil** and **1 pinch of salt**. Spread the couscous on a microwavable plate and microwave for 1 minute. Set aside while you make the Stew!

chop + combine

Chop up **1/2 zucchini**, **1/2 red bell pepper**, **3 to 4 baby carrots**, **1 green onion**, and **5 to 6 grape or cherry tomatoes** into tiny pieces. Chop **2 to 3 dried apricots**. Combine the veggies in your microwavable mug.

season + stir

Season with **1/8 teaspoon salt**, **1/8 teaspoon garlic powder**, **1/8 teaspoon ground cumin**, **1/8 teaspoon ground coriander**, and **1/8 teaspoon ground cinnamon**, and stir.

measure + add + microwave

Measure and add **1 teaspoon olive oil**, **1/2 cup water**, **1 teaspoon flour** and stir again. Add **1/4 cup of drained chickpeas** to the mug, cover with a damp paper towel, and microwave for 2 minutes. Let stand for 1 minute before microwaving for 2 final minutes. Remove with potholder, top with Crispy Couscous, let cool slightly, and enjoy!

Featured Ingredient: Spices!

Hi there!

"Let's see if you can guess who I am. I'm a small but essential ingredient in dishes; I come in many types and forms; I might be very colorful or dull and extremely hot or subtle; plus, I'm almost never left out of a dish, at least a good tasting dish! Have you guessed yet? I'm Spice! You might use just one or several of us in a recipe! What's your favorite spice? Is it cinnamon, cloves, or ginger? Perhaps you are very daring and like to add ground cayenne pepper or even Carolina reaper pepper (the hottest!) to your food. I hope you'll give many of us a try. You never know; you just might discover a new favorite!"

History

A spice is a seed, fruit, root, bark, or another part of a plant primarily used to flavor, color, or preserve food. Herbs differ from spices as they are a plant's leaves, flowers, or stems. Herbs are mainly used to flavor or garnish a dish. Some spices may also be herbs, depending on which parts of the plant are used. One example is Coriander. And, although Garlic is botanically a vegetable, it can be used as a spice or herb!

The stories and histories of the spices you see in the grocery store now are rich and span thousands and thousands of years across the world.

Spices were considered extremely valuable in ancient times, even more than gold (especially cinnamon, cloves, and black pepper). Now, spices are widely available and cost a small fraction of what they used to. Saffron is considered the most expensive spice.

The Spice Trade happened between ancient civilizations of Asia, Northeast Africa, and Europe.

During the ancient Roman Empire, trading largely came from Arabia. Traders supplied cassia, cinnamon, and other spices and purposely kept their sources a secret. This allowed the Arabians to remain the sole traders, and they could control the price, keeping them expensive.

Traders continued to keep their spices' origins secret for several centuries from both Ancient Greek and Ancient Roman civilizations. Finally, in the first century, Pliny the Elder, a Roman scholar, discovered their secret.

Later, during the Middle Ages, Europeans used spices on their food to show off their wealth since spices were still costly at that time. For example, a pound of saffron cost the same as a horse, a pound of ginger was as much as a sheep, and two pounds of mace as much as a cow!

The discovery of spices led to exploration along the Spice Route. Europeans were searching for a water route to reach the Spice Islands, the only place where spices were grown at the time. This journey led to the European colonization of India, Indonesia, and other countries of the eastern hemisphere.

Spices are important to food because they preserve it, add nutrition, flavor, and color, and tie a recipe to a particular part of the world. For example, cumin is often used in Indian but not Italian food. Likewise, oregano is often used in Greek, Italian, and Mexican food but not Thai food.

Peppercorns have been used as a spice for over 4,000 years!

Stories suggest that Chinese courtiers in the third century BCE carried cloves in their mouths to keep their breath sweet when talking with the emperor.

Indians have used spices and herbs for thousands of years for cooking and medicine.

Spices native to India were grown as early as the eighth century BCE in the gardens of Babylon.

The United States entered the Spice Trade toward the end of the 1700s. They traded salmon, codfish, tobacco, flour, soap, candles, butter, cheese, and beef for spices like pepper, cloves, cinnamon, and ginger.

Nutrition

Not only do spices help food taste amazing, but they also have astounding health benefits. For example: Cinnamon lowers blood sugar, and Ginger helps calm upset stomachs.

Turmeric helps the heart stay healthy and protects our brain from losing memory.

Black pepper aids in digestion so that our body can eat all the vitamins it needs from the food we eat.

Cumin can help with digestion and calm upset stomachs. It's also good for the heart!

Paprika has nutrients that are good for the eyes, and Chili powder benefits the brain!

Coriander helps the body get rid of toxic agents, and Cardamom helps fight inflammation.

Garlic is great for the heart and the immune system, and it helps prevent the flu!