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Moroccan Lamb and Zucchini Stew

Inspired by a bottle of infrequently used Moroccan Spices in my spice drawer as I was preparing to make sautéed zucchini in tomato sauce, I took a delicious detour and created this beautifully perfumed stew instead. It's a great way to use up the zucchini in your summer garden and freezes well for enjoying in the winter.

1 pound of ground lamb
1 large onion, cut into half inch dice
2 large cloves of garlic, finely chopped
4 medium size zucchini, cut into one inch thick rounds and then quarter the rounds
2 cups of tomato sauce
One 14 ounce can garbanzo beans, rinsed and drained well
2 teaspoons Moroccan Spice Blend* (can add more to taste)
4 cups of your favorite cooked grain or pasta, warm
¼ cup finely chopped cilantro

Make 24 one-inch in diameter meatballs with the ground lamb.

Place the meatballs in a hot non-stick skillet over medium high heat and fry them until they are browned on all sides.

Remove the browned meatballs to a plate and pour off all but one tablespoon of the lamb fat from the skillet.

Add the onions, garlic, and zucchini to the pan. Cook until the zucchini and onions are lightly browned on the edges.

Add the tomato sauce, garbanzo beans, spice blend and reserved meatballs to the pan and gently stir to combine.

Bring the mixture to a boil and turn the heat down to low. Cook for 5 minutes.

Place the warm pasta or grain in a large serving bowl, pour the stew over it, and garnish with the cilantro.

Serve immediately.

Serves 4 generously.

*Moroccan Spice Blend can be purchased at most grocery or gourmet food shops. Or you can make your own (<http://www.epicurious.com/recipes/food/views/MOROCCAN-SPICE-BLEND-109356>)

Victoria Wessler

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