

## **CHICKEN BRAISED WITH APRICOTS AND PRUNES**

*(adapted from The Saffron Tales, pressure cooker optional)*

Grapeseed oil  
2 shallots, finely chopped (or 1 large onion)  
1/2 tsp ground cumin  
1/2 tsp ground coriander  
6 chicken thighs, boneless, skinless  
1 + 1/2 teaspoon turmeric  
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon  
1/2 teaspoon black pepper, ground  
1 + 1/2 cups chicken stock (approximately)  
12 dried apricots  
12 prunes  
good pinch of saffron  
pinch of sugar and salt  
2 tablespoons very hot water  
lemon juice to taste (a tablespoon or so)

Heat 3 tablespoons of oil in a sautee pan and fry the shallots over very low heat until golden brown, take your time and allow the deep flavors to develop. Season the chicken pieces all over with salt, add to the sautee pan with the caramelized shallots, then add the cumin, coriander, cinnamon, turmeric and black pepper. Cook until the chicken is golden on all sides, then transfer to a pressure cooker. Add one cup of stock, if it almost cover the meat it will be enough, if not add another half a cup. Close the pressure cooker and once it reaches full pressure, cook for 18 minutes. In the meantime, add boiling water to the apricots and prunes in a small bowl, and let them sit to soften slightly. At the end of 18 minutes, release the pressure running the pan under the faucet with cold water.

Grind the saffron with a pinch of sugar and salt in the pestle and mortar and then transfer to a cup and leave to steep in very hot water for 2 minutes.

When the chicken is ready, add the softened fruit, along with the lemon juice and the saffron liquid. Simmer on low heat for 10 minutes with the lid off, until the sauce has thickened slightly. Adjust seasoning and serve over rice, or another side dish of your choice.

No pressure cooker? Use any heavy pan with a tight lid and cook the chicken for about 40 minutes, until very tender, then proceed with the addition of fruits and saffron liquid.