THE STIRRING LIFE

Shabzi

Iraqi stewed greens

A deeply savory, lemony stew of Swiss chard, spinach, herbs, black-eyed peas and beef
Serve hot with white basmati rice

INGREDIENTS

Greens

- 1 very large bunch Swiss chard
- 2 very large bags fresh spinach
- About 2 cups parsley
- About 1 cup cilantro
- 10–12 scallions, mostly the green parts

Beef & Black-Eyed Peas

- 2½–3 lb chuck roast
- About 4 cups cooked black-eyed peas*
- About 5 cups beef stock or reserved beef cooking liquid, plus more as needed

Everything Else

- 2½ onions, chopped
- Olive oil, for sautéing
- 2 (6 oz) cans tomato paste
- Juice of 3 lemons, or noomi basra to taste
- 1½ Tbsp curry powder
- ¼ tsp fenugreek seeds, lightly toasted and crushed
- Pinch of cayenne
- 4–6 tsp salt, or to taste
- Black pepper, to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Cook the beef. Pressure cook the chuck roast until tender. Reserve all of the cooking liquid and strain it. Cut or pull the beef into large, tender chunks and set aside.
2. Prep the greens. Wash the Swiss chard, spinach, parsley, cilantro and scallions well. Chop everything by hand. Avoid over-processing them in a food processor, because the greens can become too macerated. They don't need to be completely dry.
3. Start the onions. In a very large pot, sauté the chopped onions in olive oil until softened.
4. Add all those greens. Add the chopped greens gradually. It will look like an almost ridiculous amount at first. Let them sweat and cook down, stirring as needed, until they've reduced to roughly 15% of their original volume.
5. Build the flavor. Once the greens have completely wilted down, add the curry, crushed toasted fenugreek, cayenne, salt, black pepper and tomato paste. Add the lemon juice, or use noomi basra instead. Stir everything thoroughly into the greens.
6. Make it a stew. Add about 5 cups of the strained cooking liquid from the beef, adding more as needed to get a rich, stew-like consistency.
7. Add the beef and peas. Stir in the cooked black-eyed peas and chunks of chuck roast.
8. Stew. Let everything simmer together for at least 45 minutes, allowing the greens, beef and broth to meld together. Taste toward the end and adjust the lemon, salt, pepper and other seasonings as needed.
9. Serve hot with white basmati rice.

**Black-eyed pea shortcut: you absolutely do not have to soak and cook dried black-eyed peas. Canned work well too. Just drain and rinse them before adding them to the stew.*