

A RELAXED SOUTHERN-STYLE EASTER  
PASSOVER: A NEW TAKE ON TRADITION

HOW TO COOK  
(ALMOST)  
EVERYTHING  
FASTER

*Gourmet*  
THE MAGAZINE OF GOOD LIVING

# BLESSINGS

When an Indian chef named Floyd Cardoz opened the restaurant Tabla in New York, his compelling, utterly delicious food found a home in the melting pot. Inspired by a friend's Passover seder, here he weaves his flavors into a treasured rite of spring. Photographs by Ditte Isager



GOURMET ENTERTAINING: PASSOVER

**MENU SERVES 8**  
GEFILTE FISH  
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Chardonnay '02  
MATZO-BALL SOUP WITH  
SPRING VEGETABLES  
HAROSETH  
BRAISED BEEF BRISKET  
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CRISP FINGERLING  
POTATOES  
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COCONUT  
Yarden Tel Phares Golan  
Syrah '01  
FLOURLESS CHOCOLATE  
ALMOND CAKES  
CITRUS SALAD



Diaspora means different cultures have traveled around the world and ended up together on the same plate. Taste memories are a powerful thing.

This is not your mother's chicken soup: The gently spiced matzo balls are enlivened by aromatics such as fenugreek, ajwain, and fresh ginger.

## MATZO-BALL SOUP WITH SPRING VEGETABLES

Adapted from Floyd Cardoz

SERVES 8 TO 10

ACTIVE TIME: 1 1/2 HR. START TO FINISH: 5 HR

The matzo balls in this golden chicken soup are flavored with dill, but also with the slightly mysterious herbaceous notes of fenugreek and ajwain. You'll want to eat it all year long.

### FOR CHICKEN AND BROTH

- 2 tablespoons coriander seeds
- 1/2 tablespoon fenugreek seeds
- 1/2 tablespoon black peppercorns
- 2 medium leeks (white and pale green parts only), chopped
- 4 medium carrots, chopped (1 1/2 cups)
- 4 celery ribs, chopped (2 cups)
- 1 large white onion, chopped (2 cups)
- 1 (3 1/2-lb) whole chicken
- 5 large garlic cloves
- 1/4 cup sliced peeled fresh ginger
- 2 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 25 to 30 fresh cilantro stems
- 2 Turkish bay leaves
- 3 whole cloves
- 3 qt water

### FOR MATZO BALLS

- 1/4 teaspoon ajwain seeds
- 1 1/2 tablespoons dried fenugreek leaves
- 1 cup matzo meal
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh dill
- 1 teaspoon finely chopped peeled fresh ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 2 tablespoons chilled rendered chicken or duck fat
- 4 large eggs, separated
- 1/2 cup seltzer

### FOR SPRING VEGETABLES

- 8 baby carrots (about 4 inches long), cut diagonally into 1-inch pieces
- 6 baby turnips (about 1 1/2 inches in diameter), peeled, trimmed (leaving 1/4 inch of green tops attached), and cut into sixths
- 6 spring onions (1 1/2 to 2 inches in diameter; see cooks' note, below), green tops reserved and onions quartered (cut into sixths if large)

**SPECIAL EQUIPMENT:** an electric coffee/spice grinder

**GARNISH:** chopped spring onion greens; finely shredded fresh cilantro; chopped fresh dill

**COOK CHICKEN AND MAKE BROTH:** Toast coriander seeds in a dry small skillet (not nonstick) over moderately low heat, shaking

skillet occasionally, until fragrant and a shade darker, about 2 minutes. Transfer to a plate to cool.

• Toast fenugreek seeds and peppercorns separately in same manner, transferring to plate with coriander seeds to cool.

• Coarsely grind spices together in grinder and set aside.

• Wash leeks in a bowl of cold water, agitating them, then lift out and transfer to an 8-quart stockpot. Add remaining broth ingredients and ground spices and bring to a boil over moderate heat. Reduce heat and simmer, uncovered, skimming foam occasionally, 3 hours.

**MAKE MATZO BALLS WHILE SOUP SIMMERS:** Toast ajwain seeds in dry small skillet (not nonstick) over moderately low heat, shaking skillet occasionally, until fragrant and a shade darker, 1 to 2 minutes. Transfer to a plate to cool. Finely grind in grinder, then transfer to a bowl.

• Lightly toast fenugreek leaves in same manner, then crumble into bowl with ajwain. Whisk in matzo meal, dill, ginger, salt, and pepper until combined.

• Work rendered chicken fat into matzo mixture in a bowl with your fingers until incorporated. Stir in yolks until mixture is finely crumbled. Stir in seltzer (mixture will be lumpy).

• Beat whites with a pinch of salt in another bowl using an electric mixer just until they form soft peaks. Stir in one third of whites to lighten, then fold in remaining whites gently but thoroughly. Chill, covered, 30 minutes.

**FINISH SOUP:** Transfer chicken from broth to a cutting board to cool. When cool enough to handle, tear chicken into 1/2-inch-wide shreds, discarding skin and bones.

• Pour broth through a fine-mesh sieve into a 5-quart pot, pressing hard on and then discarding solids. Return broth to a simmer.

• With dampened hands, gently form chilled matzo mixture into 1-inch balls (do not pack), carefully dropping them into simmering broth as formed (mixture should yield about 24; moisten hands as necessary to prevent sticking).

• Simmer matzo balls, covered, 25 minutes. Add spring vegetables to soup and simmer, uncovered, until vegetables are just tender and matzo balls are cooked through, 15 to 20 minutes more. To test for doneness, halve a matzo ball: It should have a moist, uniform texture (if it's not quite ready, there will be a dry, yellowish center).

• Stir chicken into soup and cook until heated through, about 3 minutes.

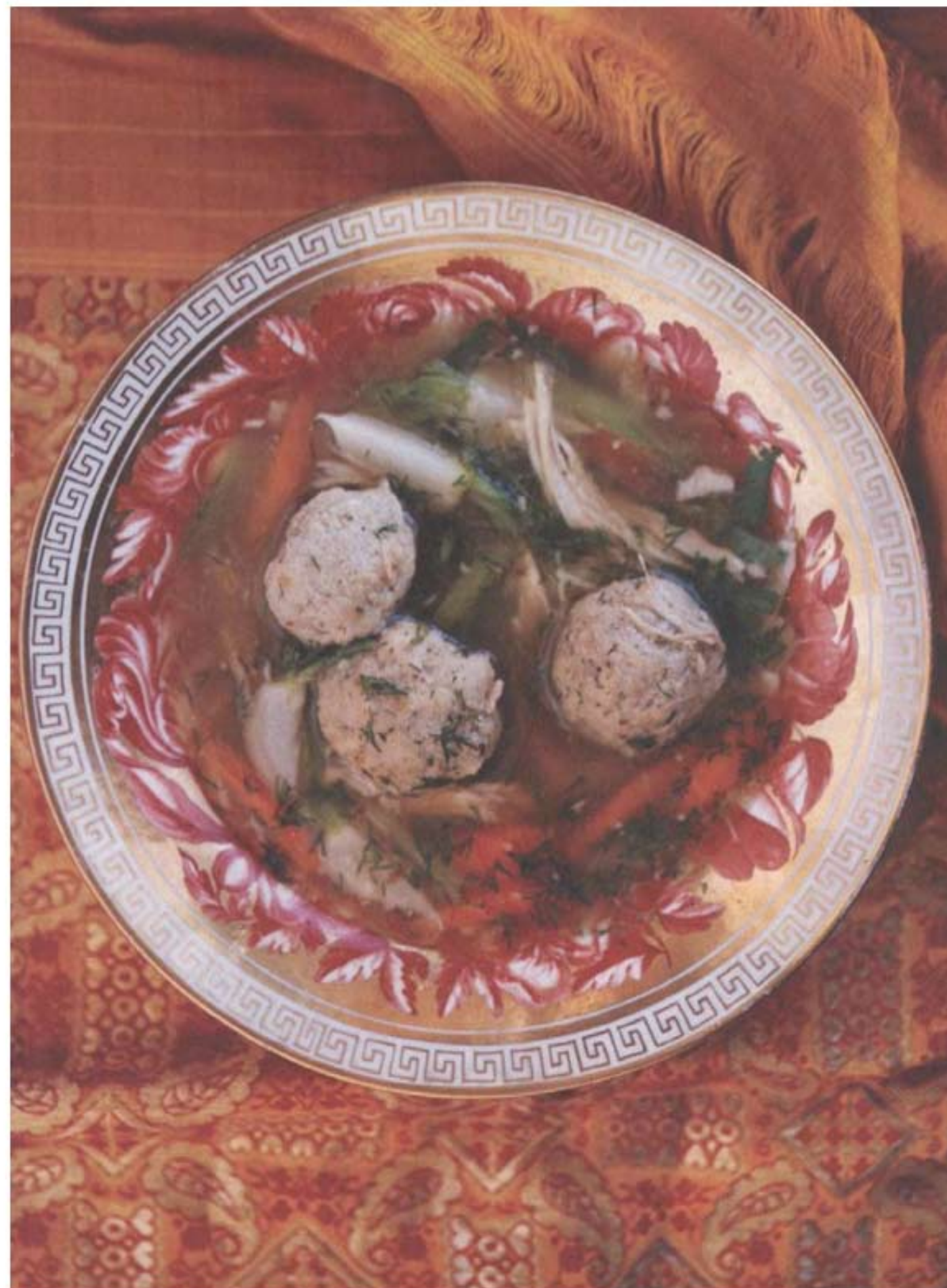
• Serve soup sprinkled with spring onion greens, cilantro, and dill.

**COOKS' NOTES:** Spring vegetables can be washed, dried, and cut 1 day ahead and chilled, wrapped in dampened paper towels, in a sealed plastic bag.

• If spring onions are not available, you can substitute 12 scallions. Chop greens and reserve for garnish and cut white and pale green parts crosswise into 1-inch pieces.

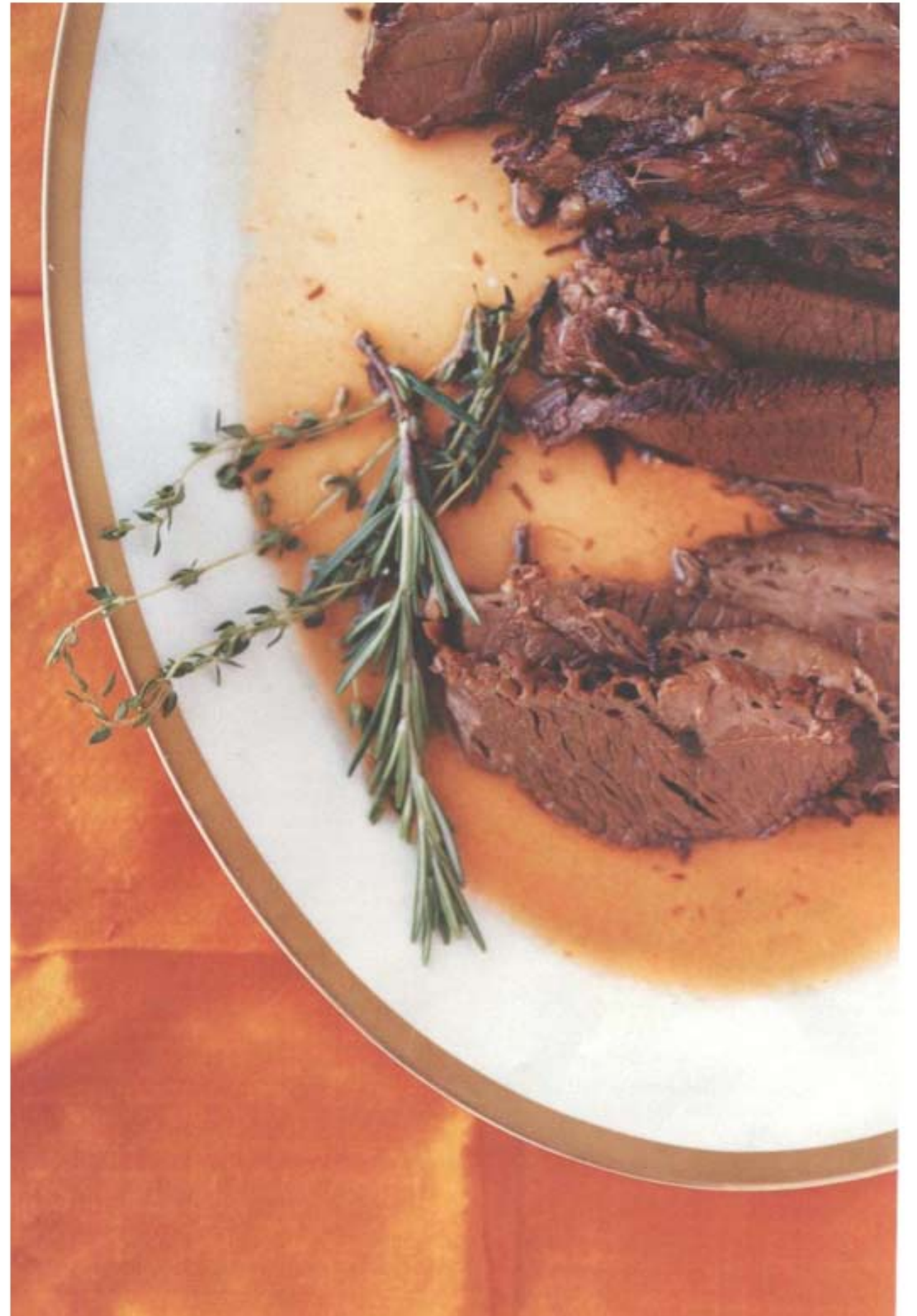
• Soup can be made 3 days ahead and chilled, uncovered, until completely cooled, then covered. Reheat before serving. >

FOODSTYLING: MAGGIE RUGGERO SET DESIGN: JEFFREY K. MILLER/ARTDEPT. FOR PRODUCT INFORMATION, SEE SHOPPING LIST





For Floyd Cardoz—who was named for the great American boxer Floyd Patterson and grew up in Bombay and Goa—fusion is a way of life. This homey meal brings his flavors into anyone's culinary repertoire. There is nothing here to shock your palate, for Cardoz is a master at melding bold ingredients (ginger, chiles, garlic, the rich aromatics of the spice trade) into a brilliantly balanced whole. Clockwise from top center: Asparagus with coconut; roasted-beet salad; gefilte fish; crisp fingerling potatoes; mango chutney; time-honored symbols of Passover; and a meal meant to be shared with everyone you love. Opposite: Braised beef brisket.



Cardoz's imaginative way of thinking about food results in an alluring dance between spicy and cool, sweet and acidic, crunchy and smooth.

Little flourless cakes, rich with almonds and dark chocolate and paired with a bright, light citrus salad, keep this meal colorful to the end.

## GEFILTE FISH

Adapted from Floyd Cardoz

SERVES 8 WITH LEFTOVERS

ACTIVE TIME: 1 HR START TO FINISH: 1 DAY (INCLUDES CHILLING)

*The traditional first course of a seder in eastern European (Ashkenazic) homes is gefilte fish (fish-mousse dumplings). They're often served on other holidays as well. What makes these special is a tomato base, which is blended with the fish in a food processor. It's an easy way to add flavor to something so delicate.*

### FOR FISH STOCK

- 3 lb fish bones and trimmings of white fish such as sole, flounder, or whiting (or a combination)
- 3 qt water
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 3 celery ribs, chopped
- 1 medium carrot, chopped
- 6 garlic cloves, coarsely chopped
- 1 (4-inch) piece peeled fresh ginger, sliced
- 2 Turkish bay leaves
- 4 whole cloves
- 1 (6- to 8-inch) sprig fresh rosemary
- 4 (4- to 6-inch) sprigs fresh cilantro
- 2½ teaspoons kosher salt

### FOR TOMATO BASE

- 2 teaspoons cumin seeds
- 2 teaspoons coriander seeds
- Scant ½ teaspoon turmeric
- Scant ¼ teaspoon cayenne
- 1 cup finely chopped white onion
- 2 teaspoons minced peeled fresh ginger
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 2 tablespoons canola oil
- 1 plum tomato, cored and finely chopped
- ½ cup water
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt

### FOR GEFILTE FISH

- 1 lb skinless white-fleshed fish fillet such as hake or scrod (or a combination), cut into 1-inch chunks
- ¼ cup matzo meal
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten
- 1 teaspoon finely grated fresh lime zest (see Tips, page 177)
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh chives
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT: an electric coffee/spice grinder

ACCOMPANIMENT: freshly grated or drained bottled white horseradish

**MAKE FISH STOCK:** Bring all stock ingredients, except salt, to a boil in a 6- to 8-quart stockpot over moderate heat, then reduce heat and simmer, skimming foam frequently, 1 hour. Pour stock through a fine-mesh sieve into a wide 5- to 6-quart heavy pot and stir in salt.

**MAKE TOMATO BASE WHILE STOCK SIMMERS:** Toast cumin seeds in a dry small skillet (not nonstick) over moderately low heat, shaking skillet occasionally, until fragrant and just a shade darker, about 2 minutes. Transfer to a plate to cool. Toast coriander seeds in same manner. Finely grind cumin and coriander together in grinder, then transfer to a small bowl and stir in turmeric and cayenne.

• Cook onion, ginger, and garlic in oil in a 10-inch heavy skillet over moderate heat, stirring occasionally, until softened, about 6 minutes. Add spice mixture, tomato, water, and salt and simmer, stirring occasionally, until tomato is broken down and mixture is thickened, 8 to 10 minutes. Remove from heat and cool mixture completely.

**MAKE GEFILTE FISH:** Bring stock to a simmer.

• Meanwhile, pulse fish in a food processor until finely chopped. Add remaining gefilte fish ingredients along with tomato base and pulse until combined.

• With dampened hands, form fish mixture into 20 ovals (1½ inches long; 2 tablespoons each), transferring them to a wax-paper-lined plate as formed. Gently drop ovals into simmering stock and simmer, partially covered, until just cooked through in center, about 20 minutes (cut one in half to test for doneness).

• Transfer gefilte fish with a slotted spoon to a plate and cover directly with a sheet of wax paper (to prevent a skin from forming). Chill until completely cooled, then transfer to a bowl or a large airtight container and chill, covered.

• Meanwhile, boil stock, uncovered, until reduced to about 4 cups, about 35 minutes. Cool to room temperature, uncovered, about 1 hour.

• Pour cooled stock over gefilte fish. Chill, covered, until cold and stock has jelled, at least 12 hours.

• Serve each guest 1 or 2 pieces of fish with some of jelled stock and horseradish on the side.

**COOKS' NOTES:** Fish stock can be made 1 month ahead and chilled, uncovered, until completely cooled, then frozen in an airtight container.

• Tomato base can be made 1 day ahead and chilled, covered.

• Gefilte fish can be chilled in stock up to 3 days. >

WINE ADVICE is on page 71.

For more information about the specialty ingredients called for in this menu, see KITCHEN NOTEBOOK, page 164, and SHOPPING LIST, page 171.



Don't let the long lists of unfamiliar ingredients intimidate you. This is not fancy food, so relax and have fun exploring tantalizing new flavors.

## HAROSETH

### DRIED-FRUIT AND NUT PASTE

Adapted from Floyd Cardoz

MAKES ABOUT 2½ CUPS

ACTIVE TIME: 15 MIN START TO FINISH: 15 MIN

Cardoz grew up eating lush chutneys and raitas—including ones made with apples and walnuts from Kashmir—so he feels right at home with haroseth, which has a place on virtually every seder table in the world. The leftovers are terrific with roast chicken.

- 1 (1½-inch) piece cinnamon stick
- 1¼ cups dried pitted dates (6 oz), very coarsely chopped
- ¼ cup walnuts (3 oz)
- 2 teaspoons finely chopped peeled fresh ginger
- 2 (½-lb) Gala apples, peeled, cored, and cut into large pieces
- ½ cup ruby Port

**SPECIAL EQUIPMENT:** an electric coffee/spice grinder

•Finely grind cinnamon stick in grinder, then transfer to a food processor. Add dates, walnuts, and ginger and pulse just until walnuts and dates are coarsely chopped. Add apples and Port and pulse until all ingredients are chopped.

**COOKS' NOTE:** Haroseth can be made 1 day ahead and chilled in an airtight container.

## BRAISED BEEF BRISKET

Adapted from Floyd Cardoz

SERVES 8

ACTIVE TIME: 1 HR START TO FINISH: 1 DAY (INCLUDES CHILLING)

Braising, an important culinary method in India, is one of Cardoz's favorites because the long, slow cooking creates such complexity of flavor. Here, the smoky heat from chipotles meets succulent, yielding brisket. Like most braises, it's best made a day or so ahead.

- 1 (3- to 3½-lb) first- or second-cut brisket (see Kitchen Notebook, page 165)
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 1 tablespoon coriander seeds
- 1 tablespoon cumin seeds
- 1 teaspoon black peppercorns
- 2 medium leeks, trimmed and chopped
- ½ cup canola oil
- 2 (3-inch) pieces cinnamon stick
- 7 whole cloves
- 2 Turkish bay leaves
- 1 to 2 dried chipotle chiles (to taste), stemmed and torn into pieces, including seeds

- 5 celery ribs, chopped
- 2 medium carrots, chopped
- 1 large white onion, chopped
- 1 head garlic, any loose papery skin discarded, cloves left unpeeled and coarsely chopped
- 1½ cups Cognac or other brandy
- 2 tablespoons packed brown sugar
- 10 (4- to 6-inch) stems fresh cilantro
- 4 (4- to 5-inch) sprigs fresh thyme
- 1 (6- to 8-inch) sprig fresh rosemary
- 6 cups chicken stock (see gourmet.com), or 4 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth plus 2 cups water (48 fl oz)

**SPECIAL EQUIPMENT:** an electric coffee/spice grinder; a wide

5- to 6-quart heavy pot with a lid; parchment paper

**ACCOMPANIMENT:** mango chutney (recipe follows)

•Pat brisket dry and rub all over with 1½ teaspoons salt. Let stand 20 minutes.

•Put oven rack in middle position and preheat oven to 350°F.

•While brisket stands, toast coriander seeds in a dry small skillet (not nonstick) over moderately low heat, shaking skillet occasionally, until fragrant and a shade darker, about 2 minutes. Transfer to a plate to cool. Toast cumin seeds and peppercorns separately in same manner, transferring to plate with coriander to cool. Finely grind spices in grinder and set aside.

•Wash leeks in a bowl of cold water, agitating them, then lift out and drain on paper towels.

•Heat oil in pot over moderately high heat until hot but not smoking. Brown brisket, starting with fat side down, on both sides, about 10 minutes total. Transfer to a large plate.

•Add cinnamon stick, cloves, bay leaves, and chiles to fat remaining in pot and cook over moderate heat, stirring, until spices are fragrant and a shade darker, about 1 minute. Add leeks, celery, carrots, onion, and garlic and cook, stirring occasionally, until vegetables are golden, 12 to 15 minutes. Add ground spices and cook, stirring, 1 minute.

•Add Cognac and deglaze pot by boiling, stirring and scraping up any brown bits, then stir in brown sugar, herbs, and chicken stock.

•Return brisket to pot and braise, covered, in oven until meat is very tender, 2½ to 3 hours.

•Transfer brisket to a clean large plate. Pour braising liquid through a fine-mesh sieve into a bowl and stir in remaining ½ teaspoon salt. Return meat to pot and pour liquid over it. Chill, loosely covered with parchment paper, until completely cooled, then cover with plastic wrap and chill, covered, at least 12 hours.

•Put oven rack in middle position and preheat oven to 350°F.

•Transfer brisket to a cutting board and cut across the grain into ¼- to ½-inch-thick slices. Skim off as much fat as possible from surface of sauce, then return sliced meat to pot and reheat, covered, in oven until heated through, 20 to 30 minutes.

**COOKS' NOTE:** Brisket can be chilled (in liquid) up to 3 days.

## MANGO CHUTNEY

Adapted from One Spice, Two Spice

MAKES ABOUT 8 CUPS

ACTIVE TIME: 30 MIN START TO FINISH: 2 ½ HR

Mangoes, cultivated in India for thousands of years, are integral to almost every aspect of life there. Mango chutney is generally made from green (unripe) mangoes. It is easy to prepare and one of the world's most versatile condiments.

- 1½ cups sugar
- 4 cups water
- 1½ cups white-wine vinegar
- 2 tablespoons paprika (not hot)
- 1 tablespoon nigella seeds (sometimes called black onion seeds)
- 1½ teaspoons mustard dal
- ½ teaspoon cayenne
- 1 teaspoon turmeric
- 4 lb unripe large mangoes (about 4), peeled, pitted, and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 12 garlic cloves, smashed and peeled
- ¼ cup very thin matchsticks peeled fresh ginger
- 1½ cups dried pitted dates (½ lb), halved crosswise
- 1 cup golden raisins (5 oz)
- 1 tablespoon kosher salt

•Cook sugar in water in a 5- to 6-quart heavy pot over moderately high heat, stirring, until dissolved. Add remaining ingredients and bring to a boil, uncovered, then reduce heat and simmer briskly, uncovered, stirring occasionally, until mangoes are tender and mixture is thickened, 1 to 1½ hours.

•Cool chutney to room temperature, about 1 hour, before serving.

**COOKS' NOTE:** Chutney improves in flavor if made 1 week ahead.

Chill, covered.

## ROASTED-BEET SALAD

Adapted from One Spice, Two Spice

SERVES 8

ACTIVE TIME: 40 MIN START TO FINISH: 2 ½ HR

In Goa, the former Portuguese colony, cooks rely on salt cod (bacalhau) when monsoons prevent fishing boats from going out. When roasted and shredded, the dried fish all but disappears in this salad, leaving behind a smoky backbone that balances the sweet, earthy beets and the acidic dressing.

- 3 lb medium beets without greens (about 8 medium), scrubbed well and trimmed, leaving 1 inch of stems attached
- 2 oz salt cod, any excess salt brushed off and fish thinly sliced
- 1½ cups quartered and thinly sliced red onion (1 medium)
- 2 tablespoons thinly sliced fresh jalapeño (about ½ of a 3-inch pepper), including seeds
- 2 teaspoons minced peeled fresh ginger
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- ¼ cup red-wine vinegar
- ¼ cup finely chopped fresh cilantro
- ½ teaspoon sugar

•Put oven rack in middle position and preheat oven to 425°F.

•Wrap beets tightly in foil, making 2 packages, and roast until tender, 1 to 1½ hours.

•While beets roast, heat a dry small heavy skillet (not nonstick) over moderate heat until hot but not smoking, then toast cod slices, turning occasionally, until crisp, golden, and lightly charred, 3 to 5 minutes (salt cod will break up).

•Carefully unwrap foil from beets and, when cool enough to handle, slip off skins. Cut beets into ½-inch cubes and put in a bowl. Add salt cod and remaining ingredients and toss well to combine.

**COOKS' NOTE:** Beet salad can be made 3 days ahead and chilled, covered.

## CRISP FINGERLING POTATOES

Adapted from Floyd Cardoz

SERVES 8

ACTIVE TIME: 30 MIN START TO FINISH: 1 ½ HR

The tangy hot-sour spice mix called chaat masala makes these potatoes irresistible. Any small, thin-skinned potato will work.

- 2 lb (3- to 4-inch-long) fingerling potatoes, scrubbed well
- 1 tablespoon cumin seeds
- 1 tablespoon chaat masala
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- ¼ teaspoon cayenne
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- About 2 qt canola oil

2½ tablespoons fresh lime juice

**SPECIAL EQUIPMENT:** an electric coffee/spice grinder; a deep-fat thermometer

•Cover potatoes with salted cold water (see Tips, page 177) by 1 inch in a wide 4- to 5-quart heavy pot, then bring to a boil over moderately high heat, partially covered. Reduce heat and simmer, partially covered, until potatoes are tender, 15 to 20 minutes.

•While potatoes simmer, toast cumin seeds in a dry small skillet (not nonstick) over moderately low heat, shaking skillet occasionally, until fragrant and a shade darker, about 2 minutes. Transfer to a small plate to cool, then finely grind in grinder and transfer to a small bowl. Stir in chaat masala, pepper, cayenne, and salt and set aside.

•Put oven rack in middle position and preheat oven to 250°F.

Place a shallow baking pan in oven.

•Drain potatoes in a colander, then transfer to a work surface to cool, arranging them in 1 layer. Wipe out pot and dry, then heat 2 inches of oil over moderate heat until thermometer registers 325°F.

•While oil heats, lightly smash cooled potatoes with palm of your hand to flatten slightly, until skins just break but potatoes still hold together.

•Fry potatoes in 5 batches, stirring occasionally, until crisp and edges are golden brown, 3 to 5 minutes. Transfer with a slotted spoon to paper towels to drain, then keep warm in baking pan in oven while frying remaining batches. (Return oil to 325°F between batches.)

•Transfer fried potatoes to a large platter or shallow bowl and sprinkle with lime juice and spice mixture to taste. Serve remaining spice mixture on the side.

For MORE RECIPES, see page 170.

MANGO CHUTNEY AND ROASTED-BEET SALAD RECIPES ARE ADAPTED FROM ONE SPICE, TWO SPICE, PROSPERITY AMERICAN FOOD; INDIAN FLAVORS BY FLOYD CARDOZ AND JANE DANIELS; LITER TOP RIGHT © 2006 BY FLOYD CARDOZ AND JANE DANIELS; LITER PUBLISHED BY WILLIAM MORROW COOKBOOKS; AN IMPRINT OF HARBINGER PUBLISHERS.