Recipe for Whole Braised Chicken with Apricots and Olives (not just for Passover)

Serves 4

1 teaspoon ground coriander
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon paprika
1/4 teaspoon ground cumin
1 whole chicken (about 3 1/2 pounds)
3 tablespoons olive oil
Salt and pepper, to taste
1 bunch (about 5) spring onions, or about 8 pearl onions, peeled and left whole
12 small red potatoes (about 12 ounces), halved
2 cups baby carrots (about 10 ounces)
3/4 cup dried apricots, halved
1/2 cup green olives
1/2 cup white wine
1 1/2 cups chicken stock, or more as needed
1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley

1. Set the oven at 350 degrees. Have on hand a large Dutch oven, braising pan, or large, deep sauté pan and an 8-inch length of kitchen twine. The pot should be large enough to accommodate the whole chicken. In a small bowl mix the coriander, cinnamon, paprika, and cumin together.

2. Pat the chicken dry with paper towels and rub it all over with 1 tablespoon of the oil. Sprinkle it on both sides with salt and pepper. Rub the spice mixture over both sides of the chicken.

3. Trim the root end from the spring onions and cut off their stalks, leaving about 2 inches of the green part. Halve them and set aside until you are ready to cook the chicken in the oven.

4. In the braising pot or pan over medium heat, heat the remaining 2 tablespoons of the oil. Add the chicken with the skin side down and cook it, without moving, for 6 to 8 minutes, or until it is well browned. Turn it over and cook on the other side for 3 minutes. Remove the pan from the heat and transfer the chicken to a plate. Do not discard the oil in the pan. When it is cool enough to touch, tie the legs together with twine.

5. Return the now empty pan to the heat and add the onions, potatoes, carrots, apricots, and olives. Add the wine and stock; the liquid in the pan should come up to about the same level as the vegetables. Sprinkle with salt and pepper and bring to a boil.

6. Place the chicken on top of the vegetables and set the pot, uncovered, in the oven. Roast for 30 minutes and check the liquid in the pot. If much of the liquid has evaporated, add more stock, 1/4 cup at a time. Continue to roast for another 45 minutes, or until the internal temperature of the chicken registers 165 degrees when a thermometer is inserted into the thickest part of the
bird. (Total roasting time is about 1 hour and fifteen minutes.) Remove the pot from the oven and transfer the chicken to a platter. Cover with foil to keep warm.

7. Return the pan to the heat and bring the sauce and vegetables to a boil. Boil for 4 to 5 minutes, to reduce the sauce by about one-fourth. Stir in the vinegar. Taste and add more salt, pepper, or vinegar if you like. Spoon the vegetables and sauce around the chicken and sprinkle with parsley. Carve and serve.

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