

Tagine | professional guidelines on How to Cook in a Moroccan Tagine



Tagine



[Tagine](#) is a dish named after the earthenware pot it is made in, a cooking vessel normally made of clay or ceramic which has been a part of Moroccan cuisine for centuries. It is typically made with sliced meat, poultry or fish together with vegetables or fruit. Spices, nuts, and dried fruits are also common. Common spices include ginger, cumin, turmeric, cinnamon, and saffron. Paprika and chili are used in vegetable tajines, slow-cooked for a savory stew. Variations of the pot are adopted around the world. [Tagine](#) is also called *Maraq* or *Marca*.

The rich history of [tagine](#) date back to Harun-al Rashid, a ruler of the Muslim conquests, its mention can also be seen in Arab traditions, among the bedouin tribes. [Tagine](#) holds its place in the heart of history and culture due to its uniqueness and the fact that so many cultures adopted the basic recipe and added a touch of their own distinct taste. Such as fruits, dates, apricots.

Today the earthen pot and its traditional broth are savored in the Middle East and North Africa. In the original Qidra style, saman (**clarified butter**) is used to lubricate the surface and a puree of chopped onion is added for flavor and aroma. For Muqawlli-style cooking, the ingredients are placed in **olive oil** to enrich the flavors. Because the tajine pot's domed or cone-shaped lid absorbs steam and returns the condensed liquid to the bowl, the cooking of meats and vegetables requires a minimal amount of water. This cooking method is important in areas where water supply is poor or where there is still no public water available.

What is a [tagine](#) pot?



A popular question asked often is if the savory flavor of the [tagine](#) is mainly due to its pot? Since people have added variations to the recipe, can a simple dutch oven act as a substitute too? Let's discuss why the [tagine](#) pot holds so much value in Moroccan Culture. Historically, the nomads used the [tagine](#) pot as a portable medium of cooking while on the move. Earthenware tagine pots simmer food keeping all its natural flavors intact producing a tender stew with aromatic flavors.

What is a [tagine](#) pot used for?



A [tagine](#) is a common cone-shaped cooking vessel in Morocco; it is made of either ceramic or clay. All materials in Morocco are quite similar, but the unglazed clay adds rustic, earthy flavor and aroma to whatever is cooked in it. A Moroccan [tagine](#)'s base is wide and shallow while the conical lid helps return condensed steam to the dish. A tiny hole at the top of the lid

releases some steam, but not all of it. It is glazed or ceramic. It is best used to prepare all kinds of [tagines](#) i.e vegetable, chicken, beef, etc.

Can you cook [tagine](#) on a stove?



Cooking in a [tagine](#) is easier than you imagine, just a few basic steps and you will be a pro!

- Never place a [tagine](#) in the dishwasher-wash your [tagine](#) always by hand after use.
- [Tagines](#) will usually be cook over coals or open flames, also over gas fires, electric elements or even in the oven.
- The ceramic expands slightly when heated, sometimes creating small, thin cracks in the glaze. This is all well as it will improve the resistance of the [tagine](#) to changes in temperature.
- [Tagine](#) pot is fairly easy to use as the pot does all the work however if you place a cold [tagine](#), especially an unglazed earthenware [tagine](#), on a hot surface it can crack. Some tagines are designed for the oven or stovetop, while others are simply used as decorative serving dishes.

Benefits of using [tagine](#) pot

The benefit of cooking a [tagine](#) (meal) in a [tagine](#) (oven) is the pot seals in all the tasty ingredients that normally have a little moisture from sauce and vegetables, then the moisture goes up the sides of the cloth and down over the ingredients, creating a self-basting, flavor-enhancing process.

Popular Tagine Recipes for you to try out!

By now we are sure that you also want to try cooking in a [tagine](#) pot, or maybe you already have and want to try another recipe, either way, we have compiled quick recipes for you to make the best of with your [tagine](#) pot. Try them and let us know in the comments which one works best for you.

Vegetable tagine



- 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil, more for later
- 2 medium yellow onions, peeled and chopped
- 8–10 garlic cloves, peeled and chopped
- 2 large carrots, peeled and chopped
- 2 large russet potatoes, peeled and cubed
- 1 large sweet potato, peeled and cubed
- Salt
- 1 tbsp Harissa spice blend, 1 tsp ground coriander, 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp ground turmeric
- 2 cups canned whole peeled tomatoes
- 1/2 cup heaping chopped dried apricot
- 1-quart low-sodium vegetable broth (or broth of your choice)
- 2 cups cooked chickpeas
- 1 lemon, juice of
- Handful fresh parsley leaves

In a large heavy pot, heat olive oil over medium heat until just shimmering, add onions, garlic, and chopped veggies. Season with salt and spices. Cook for 5 to 7 minutes on medium-high heat, add tomatoes, apricot, and broth. Keep the heat on medium-high, and cook for 10 minutes. Then reduce heat, cover and simmer for another 20 to 25 minutes or until veggies are tender. Stir in chickpeas and cook another 5 minutes on low heat. Stir in lemon juice and fresh parsley. Taste and adjust seasoning.

Fish tagine



- 1 onion chopped
- good pinch **saffron**
- 600ml hot fish or chicken stock
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- thumb-sized piece ginger
- , peeled and grated
- ½ green chili (deseeded if you don't like it too hot), finely sliced
- 2 tsp ground cumin
- tsp ground coriander
- 1 tsp **cinnamon**
- 1 tbsp tomato purée
- 10 cherry tomatoes, halved
- 2 tbsp ground almond
- zest 1 orange
- 1 tbsp **honey**
- 700g white fish, cut into large chunks
- small bunch coriander, chopped
- handful flaked almond, toasted
- ½ green chili, (deseeded if you don't like it too hot), to serve

Heat the oil in a large pan. Add the onion, meanwhile, put the saffron in the hot stock and leave to steep. Add the garlic, ginger, and chili. Tip in the spices and tomato purée, stir for a few mins until fragrant, then add the tomatoes, ground almonds, orange zest and juice, honey and saffron-scented stock. Cook for a few minutes, add the fish to the pan, making

sure the pieces are all nestled under the sauce. Cover with a lid and simmer on a low heat for 2-3 mins until just cooked. Check to season, add the coriander and scatter with the toasted almonds. Serve scattered with the chili, along with some couscous and a blob of natural yogurt, if you like.

Chicken/Beef [Tagine](#)

- 2 T olive oil
- 1 – 2 lbs beef/chicken, cut into bite-sized pieces (stew meat or a better cut if desired (see notes)
 - 1 large onion, chopped ginger, 1 t cumin, 1 t saffron
- can fire-roasted diced tomatoes
- 3 carrots, sliced crosswise into bite-sized pieces
- 1 lb baby potatoes, cut into bite-sized pieces
- ¼ cup chopped cilantro



Season beef with salt and pepper. Heat [tagine](#) over medium-high heat. Add olive oil then beef. Cook beef until browned on all sides (cook in two batches if necessary, see notes). Add onions, stir and cook for two minutes more. Add ginger, cumin, and saffron, mix well. Top with tomatoes, carrots, and potatoes. Place [tagine](#) lid over stew and simmer for at least one hour, stirring occasionally. Season stew to taste with kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper. Top with freshly chopped cilantro and serve.