

# Chick-pea Tomato Stew with Moroccan Flavors

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Yield: about 30 cups, serves 15 to 20 as a main dish

Preparation time: about 2 hours, not including overnight soaking time for chick-peas

Special features: vegetarian, low sodium, low fat, make ahead, freezes well

## What Makes it Great:

This is an attractive, low fat, low sodium, vegetarian dish that freezes well. The light colored chick-peas against the red tomatoes and green spinach makes a colorful presentation. For a complete meal, serve with couscous or brown rice and crusty bread.

Adding the optional sausage significantly improves the dish if you are not cooking for vegetarians. I use Costco 's Casual Gourmet chicken sausage with roasted red peppers and spinach at the rate of about ½ sausage per person.

## Special Note:

The preserved lemon peel should be made at least a month before you cook this dish, but adds a unique flavor that is well worth the effort. However, if you have not made preserved lemon peel in advance, saute 1 cup of finely diced fresh lemon peel (2 to 3 lemons), including some of the white rind, in olive oil, 1 teaspoon salt and 2 teaspoons of sugar until tender. Add the whole mixture to the dish.

The beans are best made a day ahead and chilled overnight.

Washing and de-stemming the spinach leaves is the time-consuming part of the preparation of this dish, which is why I like to use chard.

## Ingredients:

1 pound dried chick-peas (garbanzo beans)  
2 cinnamon sticks, broken in half  
2 teaspoons cumin seeds, divided  
2 teaspoons coriander seeds, divided  
1 cup raisins  
1 cup golden raisins  
¼ cup olive oil  
3 large onions, sliced thin  
2 large (28-32 ounce) cans of whole large tomatoes, no salt (Trader Joe's)  
1 large can diced tomatoes  
1 cup preserved lemon peel, lightly rinsed and then diced (see comments below)  
1 teaspoon ground cumin  
1 teaspoon ground coriander  
1 ½ pounds spinach or chard leaves, stems removed, coarsely chopped (about 10 cups packed)

Optional: 10 to 15 pre-cooked spicy chicken sausages, cut into bite sized pieces

## **Preparation:**

In a 3 quart pot, wash and sort beans, cover 2" with water and soak overnight. The next day, drain and cover with fresh water to 2" above beans. Add cinnamon sticks, 1 tsp cumin seeds, 1 tsp coriander seeds. Simmer until chick-peas are just tender, about 40 minutes, being careful not to overcook. Remove from heat, stir in both cups of raisins, allowing them to plump in the cooking water. Add more water if needed. Remove cinnamon sticks and chill overnight, or proceed with the rest of the dish.

In a large heavy pot, heat the oil over medium heat and cook onions until soft and partly browned, about 15 minutes. Meanwhile, wash, de-stem and coarsely chop the greens, and set aside. Cut the whole tomatoes into smaller pieces by slicing in the can with a sharp knife. Stir in all 3 cans of tomatoes and juice, add diced preserved lemon peel and remaining spices and bring to a simmer. Add the chopped spinach or chard and cook until just wilted. Remove from heat and stir in the chilled chick-peas with raisins.

Reheat only the portion you wish to use immediately. Chill the rest, and then freeze in single serving portions.

## **Comments:**

Preserved lemon peel should be made at least a month in advance. Pack clean juiced lemon peel quarters in a clean glass jar with lots of kosher salt and cover with lemon juice. Cover tightly and store unrefrigerated in cool place for a month, then refrigerate.

Inspired by:

<http://www.epicurious.com/recipes/food/views/Chick-Pea-Tomato-Stew-with-Moroccan-Flavors-11434>