

# Lebanese Lemon Chicken

This one is based on a recipe from Jamie Oliver's *Jamie's Kitchen*. Since I don't yet know where to buy farika, I've only ever used bulghur wheat. Why one would use tequila or vodka instead of the white wine, I just don't know either.

## Planning

serves:	4
prep time:	15 mins
cooking time:	60 mins

## Ingredients

- 1 chicken cut into serving pieces
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp fennel seeds
- ½ tsp cumin seeds
- ½ tsp chilli powder
- 1 tsp black peppercorns
- 1 tsp salt
- 3 tbs (heaped) flour
- 5 tbs olive oil
- 1 large fennel bulb, trimmed and chopped
- 1 red onion, peeled and chopped
- 1 preserved lemon or 1½ preserved limes
- 1 sprig rosemary, roughly chopped
- 150g farika or bulghur wheat
- 1 wineglass white wine, tequila or vodka
- 2 medium sweet potatoes
- 565ml (1 pt) chicken stock
- 1 small tub sour cream or crème fraîche

## Method

Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/gas 4. Prepare the preserved lemon/limes by removing any core and seeds before roughly chopping them. Peel the sweet potatoes and cut them into chunks of about 1½ cms. Select a flame and oven proof pan (like a roasting tray) that will take the chicken pieces snugly in a single layer. Make a cartouche to fit the pan loosely. (I use a teflon non-stick sheet but greaseproof paper is more traditional!)

Grind up all the spices either in a pestle and mortar or, preferably, using a powered spice grinder to save your arms. Once you have a fine powder, add these to the flour and toss the lot into a large polythene bag. Close the bag firmly and shake well to mix. Now add the chicken to the bag and toss well again to coat all the chicken with the seasoned flour mixture. Tip everything out onto a plate. (You're going to use any excess flour mixture later.)

Heat your chosen pan on the hob and add the olive oil. Gently shake any excess flour from the chicken pieces and brown them on all sides in the hot oil. Once browned, remove them to a plate, lower the heat and add the fennel, onion, lemon/limes and rosemary. Sweat these gently for about five mins until softened. Stir in the excess seasoned flour, then add the farika/bulghur wheat and stir well again. Add the alcohol stirring well until most of the liquid is absorbed. Add the sweet potato chunks and stir once again.

Add the chicken stock up to the same level as the grains and vegetables. (Use extra water if necessary.) Cover the vegetable mixture with the loose-fitting cartouche, oiled lightly (if necessary) to prevent sticking. Arrange the chicken pieces in a single layer on top and cook in the oven for about 45 mins until the skin crisps.

Serve with dollops of soured cream or crème fraîche. (If your fennel had some nice feathery tops, chop these and sprinkle them over too.)