

“Couscous and Other Good Food From Morocco,” one with radishes and cinnamon, another with grated carrots and orange-flower water and one very much like Claiborne’s with olives and paprika. She even wrote, “Olives and oranges are one of those miracle combinations, like lamb and garlic, before which I sometimes feel I should bow in gratitude.”

I sent Claiborne’s recipe to Andrew Carmellini, the chef and an owner of Locanda Verde in Manhattan. Claiborne’s salad immediately reminded him of the citrus salads served along the Amalfi coast and on Sicily, where orange-and-lemon salad is commonplace. Cooks there also use oranges, wild oregano and green olives to make sauce Agrigento, an accompaniment to black bass or scallops.

Usually the chefs who supply a modern recipe for this column like to stick to one idea. But Carmellini wanted to play with two. The first was a simple orange-and-avocado salad his mother in Florida makes. He loves Mexican food, so he added cilantro, dried oregano and hot sauce, contrasting seasonings that serve to underscore the oranges’ sweetness.

Next he shifted to Morocco to deconstruct the flavors of the salad and recombine them in a wonderfully layered lamb tagine with citrus rice. The lamb is simmered in a bath of tomatoes, Moroccan spices, orange rind, olives, ginger and garlic, and you use it to blanket basmati rice that’s infused with chilies, lemon zest and orange sections. For a little crunch, he tops the tagine with toasted almonds and sesame seeds. It’s the kind of dish whose complexity inspires respect for its maker.

When you’re in a hurry, you can toss together the avocado-and-orange salad in about five minutes. When you want to submit to the complex (but not difficult) workings of Carmellini’s tagine — when you want to understand the power of citrus in savory dishes — you can follow his recipe step by step. And when you just want to get mad at the world, try Claiborne’s original recipe and fume that it’s not available everywhere.

1980: SPICY ORANGE SALAD, MOROCCAN STYLE

This recipe appeared in an article in The Times by Craig Claiborne.

3 large seedless oranges	Salt
$\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon cayenne	Freshly ground black pepper
1 teaspoon paprika	
$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon garlic	$\frac{1}{3}$ cup chopped parsley
3 tablespoons olive oil	12 pitted black olives, preferably imported Greek or Italian.
1 tablespoon red-wine or sherry vinegar	

1. Peel the oranges, paring away all the exterior white pulp. Cut each orange into 8 wedges. Cut each wedge into 1-inch pieces. Set aside.
2. Place the cayenne, paprika, garlic, olive oil and vinegar in a salad bowl. Add salt and pepper to taste and whisk to combine. Add the oranges, parsley and olives. Toss gently to blend. Serve cold or at room temperature. *Serves 4.*

2010: LAMB TAGINE WITH GREEN OLIVES

By Andrew Carmellini, the chef and an owner of Locanda Verde in Manhattan. If you can get your hands on ras el hanout, you can use it instead of making the spice mixture. And no worries if you don’t have a tagine — a covered Dutch oven will work just fine.



For the spice mixture:

- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon ground coriander
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground cumin
- $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon paprika
- Generous pinch cayenne
- Pinch saffron

For the tagine:

- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 pounds lamb stew meat, cut into chunks
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon pepper
- 1 medium onion, sliced into medium-width pieces (about 1 cup)
- 1 clove garlic, peeled
- 1 tablespoon diced, fresh ginger (from about 1 inch)
- Juice of 1 orange
- 1 14-ounce can diced or chopped tomatoes

- 1 2-inch-long piece of orange peel
- 2 cups chicken broth
- 1 teaspoon honey
- 1 medium carrot, sliced $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch thick (about 1 cup)
- 1 celery rib, sliced $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch thick (about 1 cup)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sliced almonds
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoons sesame seeds
- 8 green olives, sliced into quarters (about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup)

For the citrus rice:

- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups basmati rice, rinsed 3 times
- 1 bay leaf, preferably fresh
- Grated zest of 1 lemon
- Pinch of salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon red-pepper flakes
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 1 orange, sectioned and chopped (about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup)
- 2 scallions, sliced.

1. Make the spice mixture by stirring together the spices in a small bowl. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.
2. In a large, ovenproof stew pot or tagine, heat the oil over medium-high heat. Season the lamb all over with salt and pepper. Add the meat to the pot and stir to coat in the oil. Brown for about 5 minutes, stirring occasionally to make sure the meat browns evenly on all sides. Transfer the meat to a bowl and set it aside.
3. Lower the heat to medium and add the onion, stirring to coat. Sauté for about a minute, until it begins to soften. Add the garlic and ginger and add the meat back to the pot. Stir everything together. Squeeze the orange juice into the pot and mix well. Add the tomatoes, orange peel, spice mixture, chicken broth and honey. Mix well. Raise the heat to medium-high and bring the mixture to a simmer, then cover the pot and put it in the oven. Cook for 1 hour or until the meat is about half-cooked.
4. Stir in the carrots and celery and return the pot to the oven. Cook for another 30 to 45 minutes, until the sauce is thick and reduced and the lamb is tender.
5. While the tagine is in the oven, toast the almonds and the sesame seeds in a small pan over low heat until the nuts are golden, about 5 minutes, stirring regularly to make sure the almonds don’t burn.
6. About 15 minutes before the tagine is finished, make the citrus rice: Put the rice and 2 cups of water in a large pot set over high heat. Add the bay leaf, lemon zest, salt, red-pepper flakes and butter. When the water boils, lower the heat and cover the pot with a tight-fitting lid. Continue to simmer until the liquid has been absorbed, about 12 minutes. Turn off the heat. Add the lemon juice, orange pieces and scallions and mix well. Transfer to a large bowl and serve immediately.
7. Remove the garlic clove and orange peel from the tagine. Add the olives and spoon the tagine onto a large serving plate. Sprinkle the almonds and sesame seeds on top. Serve immediately, with citrus rice. *Serves 4.* ♦