



Jewish Cuisine Around the Globe with Shani Frankel

Session #1: Kubba Qar' Hamudh (Dumpling Stew with Squash)

Among the best-known dishes in Iraqi cuisine are the *kubba* stews. (*Kubba* means ball or patty.) These are wonderful preparations, abundant with sauce and flavor, which have as their unifying feature the presence of small meatballs encased in semolina dough. These dumplings are called *kubba*.

So celebrated are these *kubba* stews, in fact, that they have become exemplars of Iraqi cuisine. "Does your mother make *marak kubba* (*kubba* soup)?" is a question often asked of Iraqis in Israel.

The fame of these dishes is well deserved – they are remarkable. The stews are themselves wonderful, and the semolina shells of the *kubba* absorb the distinct flavors of each of the stews, transforming their surrounding sauces while being transformed by them.

This exquisite stew is striking in its flavors, intriguing hints of mint combine with the tanginess of lemon and the delicate sweetness of squash to produce a wonderfully complex, sophisticated, and refreshingly light dish. Even palates less accustomed to exotic tastes will be won over by this delightful preparation.

This dish, like almost all Iraqi stews, is to be eaten over white rice. Yield: Seven average servings

Dough

- 3 cups semolina
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1½ cups water

Filling

- 1 lb. ground beef, extra lean (can use turkey instead)
- 2 large onions
- 1 tablespoon canola oil
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- ⅓ tsp cayenne pepper
- ½ teaspoon cumin
- ¼ teaspoon cinnamon

Stew

- 1 ½ lbs. of zucchini, white squash, or opal squash (but do not mix different types), cut into thick half rounds (taste raw to ensure not bitter)
- 1 medium sized onion, finely chopped
- 2-3 cloves of garlic, finely diced
- 3 very ripe and soft plum tomatoes (or 4, if small) peeled and cut into small chunks (as an alternative, can use ½ lb. canned tomatoes)
- 1 flat teaspoon tomato paste
- Juice from ½ - 1 lemon
- ¼ - ½ bunch fresh mint leaves, very well washed, torn or cut slightly into coarse pieces
- 2½ tablespoons oil
- ¾ - 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoons pepper
- ¼ - ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper

Looking forward to learning & cooking with you soon!

Shani