



PREP

15 minutes

COOK

35 minutes

YIELD

6

READY IN

50 minutes

Couscous with Seven Vegetables Recipe

A celebration of seasonal produce and the new year.

BY EMILY PASTER | AUGUST 31, 2020

Seven is a lucky number in many religions, including Judaism. The world was created in seven days; together, the patriarchs and matriarchs add up to seven; at a Jewish wedding, there are seven blessings; and so on.

It is no wonder, then, that on Rosh Hashanah — when we try to do everything we can to ensure good luck for the coming year — there is a tradition of eating seven vegetables. Among North African Jews, especially those of [Moroccan origin](#), Couscous with Seven Vegetables is a traditional and cherished Rosh Hashanah dish. The [couscous](#) has a special significance: the many tiny grains represent a wish for a year with countless blessings.

With many of us rethinking our Rosh Hashanah celebrations this year, it seems fitting to change up the traditional holiday fare.

Rosh Hashanah occurs at a time of year when many vegetables are at their peak, such as squash and root vegetables, which are perfect for this dish. The vegetables in the recipe are only a suggestion — feel free to play around, just make sure you have a variety of textures and flavors.

Moroccan food is highly seasoned, but not spicy. So you will notice a wide range of spices in this dish, from paprika to cinnamon. I highly recommend seeking out the North African spice blend [ras el hanout](#). When added at the end of cooking, ras el-hanout adds sweet, earthy and even floral notes to your dish. That's because it is a mix of many different ingredients including pepper, cinnamon, nutmeg, allspice, cumin, cardamom pods, rose petals, and grains of paradise. You can find ras el-hanout at a good spice shop, a grocery store with a good spice selection (like Whole Foods, which does carry their own) or

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Photo credit: Emily Paster

Ingredients

- 3 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 large yellow onion, diced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 Tbsp tomato paste
- 2 tomatoes, seeded and diced
- 2 tsp cumin
- 1 tsp paprika
- 1 tsp ground ginger
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp cayenne
- 2 red peppers, chopped
- 2 zucchini, halved and cut into wedges
- 2-3 small turnips, peeled and cut into wedges
- 1 bunch carrots, peeled and chopped

1 butternut squash, peeled and cubed
4 cups vegetable broth or water
15 oz can chickpeas, rinsed and drained
2 tsp ras el-hanout
2 Tbsp chopped flat-leaf parsley
handful slivered almonds (optional)
salt and pepper to taste
1 box instant couscous

Directions

1. Heat the olive oil in a large, deep saucepan or Dutch oven over medium heat. Add the onions and sauté until softened, about 5 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.

2. Add the garlic and tomatoes and sauté until softened, about 5 minutes. Add the tomato paste and spices, and stir to combine. Sauté the mixture for a few additional minutes until fragrant, stirring frequently to prevent scorching.

3. Add the red peppers, zucchini, turnips, carrots, and squash, as well as the broth or water. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and cover. Simmer until vegetables are tender, about 10-15 minutes.

4. Remove cover and add chickpeas. Simmer until chickpeas are heated through and stew is thickened, another 5-10 minutes. (May be done ahead up to this point.)

5. Meanwhile, make couscous according to package directions. Remove from heat and cover. Let stand 5 minutes. Remove cover and fluff couscous with a fork to break up any clumps.

6. Just before serving, add the ras el-hanout to the stew. Taste and adjust seasonings.

7. To serve, spread the couscous on a platter or shallow dish with a well in the middle. Spoon the vegetable stew over the couscous. Garnish with chopped parsley and slivered almonds, if using.

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