Shakshouka

Featured on March 17th, 2018 for demonstration with Chef Alon Shaya

“Eggs poached in a spicy, savory tomato sauce: this dish serves itself. It’s my go-to when I show up at someone’s house and everyone is hungry. Chances are, there are eggs and a can of tomatoes on hand. Outside of that foundation, you can be as creative or as simple about adding anything else you like […] Part of the fun is making this dish your own, but one word of advice: try it with zhug, a spicy Yemeni green chili sauce, like the Middle Eastern approach to pesto. Its fresh, herbal heat is the perfect finishing touch.” – excerpt from Shaya: An Odyssey of Food, My Journey Back to Israel (Aldred A. Knopf, 2018) by Alon Shaya with Tina Antolini

Shakshouka

Ingredients

½ pound Jerusalem artichokes (also known as sunchokes)
Plenty of water to boil Jerusalem artichokes
1 tablespoon Morton kosher salt
Ice bath
1 pound fava beans in their shells

3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
1 pint cherry tomatoes
1 small red bell pepper, seeded and thinly sliced
1 small yellow onion, thinly sliced
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 28-ounce can peeled whole tomatoes
2 teaspoons Morton kosher salt
1 egg per person
¼ cup zhug

Directions

Fill a large pot with water and 1 tablespoon of salt, and bring to a boil. Thoroughly scrub the Jerusalem artichokes; if they’re large or unevenly sized, cut them into even chunks. Boil for 30 to 35 minutes, until they’re about the consistency of a cooked potato, easily pierced with a knife but not falling apart. Drain, and when they’re cool enough to handle, slice into little coins.

Fill another pot with water and bring it to a boil; meanwhile, prepare an ice bath. Cook the fava beans for 5 minutes, or until the outer shell puffs up and pulls away from the bean. The water in the pot will turn reddish, but don’t freak out- that’s normal. Shock the beans in the ice bath to stop the cooking, then shell them when they’ve cooled down. You should have about 1 cup of beans.
Add the olive oil to a large enameled or stainless-steel skillet that has a lid (but don’t use the lid just yet). Turn the heat to high, and when the oil is shimmering, pull the skillet off the heat and carefully add the cherry tomatoes; they’ll give off a lot of smoke and may splatter. Place the pan back on the heat, and don’t stir; you want the tomatoes to char lightly in a few places.

After a couple of minutes, when the tomatoes are starting to blister, stir in the bell peppers, onions, and garlic. Cook, stirring frequently, for 4 minutes or so, until all the vegetables are a little golden around the edges and the cherry tomatoes are melting into everything else.

Decrease the heat to medium, and add the Jerusalem artichokes, favas, and the remaining 2 teaspoons of salt. Roughly crush the canned tomatoes between your fingers, or chop them, and add them to the pan with their juices. Cook the sauce for a couple of minutes, until it thickens slightly.

Decrease the heat to medium-low, and use your spoon to make little divots in the sauce, one per egg. Crack an egg into each, cover the pan, and cook for 4 to 5 minutes, until the egg white is set but the center still jiggles. Dollop a spoonful of zhug over each egg before serving.

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