

Easy-to-prepare meals and accompanying drinks

Spanish Chicken Stew

BY RACHEL WALKER



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LONG FEBRUARY EVENINGS ARE A GOOD TIME to indulge in a little culinary travel—something that whisks you away to warmer climes. Perhaps it's the smell of cooking scampi that evokes memories of summer holidays, or the tang of feta and olives in a Greek salad. Or maybe fish and chips with a pint of bitter transports you to that pub garden in Cornwall.

Whatever memory you're calling on, commitment is key. If it was a San Miguel kind of trip, then stock up the fridge, turn up the volume on your holiday soundtrack, draw the curtains and tuck into this delicious stew. It will provide a temporary Spanish respite from the British chill.

Serves 4

- 2tbsp olive oil
- 4 chicken thighs
- 150g chorizo, diced
- 1 red onion, sliced
- 3 garlic cloves, crushed
- 1tsp smoked paprika
- 400g ready-to-eat chickpeas, rinsed
- 200ml chicken stock
- 400g tin of chopped tomatoes

- 1tbsp tomato paste
- Optional: spinach or pitted olives

1. Preheat the oven to 180C
2. Heat the oil in a casserole pan, and cook the chicken thighs (in batches, if needed), until they turn golden all over. Remove from the pan with a slotted spoon, put on a plate and set to one side.
3. Cook the chorizo in the same pan.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY TIM & ZOE HILL



When it starts to release oil, add the onions. Then, when they start to soften, add the garlic. Stir until it's cooked and finally add the paprika to the pan—cooking just for 10–15 seconds so that the kitchen is filled with aromas, but not enough for the paprika to catch and burn.

4. Add the chickpeas, stock, tinned tomatoes and tomato paste. Return the chicken to the pan. Put on the lid and cook at 180C for 35 minutes. Check that the chicken is cooked through. If you're including spinach or pitted olives, add them to the pan now, until wilted or heated through.
4. Serve with crusty bread.

Ideal drink for the dish

■ **Noster Nobilis**, Asda, £6.98

■ **Sainsbury's Taste the Difference Priorat**, £10

The Spanish wine region of Priorat is known for powerful, high-alcohol reds, which are slowly becoming more available and affordable.



Churros and Chocolate

Makes approximately 30

- ½ tsp salt
- 200g strong white flour
- ¼ tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 260ml water at around 70C
- 400ml sunflower, for frying
- A thermometer and a piping bag

For the dipping sauce

- 100g dark (70%) chocolate, chopped
- 120ml double cream

1. Whisk the salt, bicarbonate of soda and flour in a bowl. Add the water and whisk quite vigorously so there are no lumps.
2. Leave to sit in the bowl while you prepare the oil.
3. Heat the oil in a small saucepan and bring the temperature to 180C (use the thermometer).
4. Spoon the dough into a piping bag (use a star nozzle if you want ridges). Twist the piping bag and hold with one hand. Gently squeeze out the dough to a 5cm piece and snip with scissors into the oil, frying in small batches.
5. Fry for a couple of minutes and then turn over with tongs and cook until golden brown. Drain on paper

pudding
of the
Month



6. Towels and keep the churros in a warm oven.
7. There's no strict shape for churros. Snipping them into the hot oil in lines is the easiest way to get started. Once you get the hang of it, you can try piping them into other shapes, such as the horseshoes shown above.
8. For the dipping sauce, place the chopped chocolate into a heat-proof bowl. Bring the double cream to a simmer in a saucepan, then pour over the chocolate. Let it sit for one minute to let the chocolate melt, then stir to combine. Serve the churros immediately, accompanied by the sauce.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY HELEN CATHCART

Delightful Dunking

CHEF MILL TAYLOR, whose family live in Andalusia, remembers churros dunked in chocolate in her new book

Party-Perfect Treats: "It was a weekend treat for us as kids," she says. "Now I'll happily order them on my own and sneak a dunk into my café con leche."

Although tastes might vary, dunking is universal. Novelist Marcel Proust found that eating a piece of tea-soaked cake gave him an "exquisite pleasure" that evoked a happy childhood memory. For others, a "Proustian moment" might be stirred by a digestive biscuit plunged into a mug of weak tea, or a Hovis soldier dunked into a cup of tomato soup. In the US, it's more likely to be an Oreo cookie dipped in a glass of milk, while in India it might be a cake rusk soaked in warm masala chai. ▶

Party-Perfect Bites is available for just £11.99 until the end of February. Call 01256 302 699 and quote GLR L4L



CREATE A SPANISH CHEESEBOARD

If you're having two cheeses, then go for a hard and a soft—for instance, a Manchego and a Canarejal Cremoso. If you're having three, then add a blue cheese, such as a Cabrales or a Valdeon Blue. The key to an authentic Spanish cheeseboard is in the garnishes. Honey, walnuts and figs are all welcome additions.

BOOK



The Cookbook Book, £22.75. Beautiful anthology of cookbooks from the past century.

BARGAIN



Tickets are free for **Rye Bay Scallop Week**, February 21–March 1. Visit scallop.org.uk

BLOW-OUT



AGA CITY60, £4,995. At just 60cm wide, this two-door Aga is perfect for smaller homes.