Main dishes / Ethiopia

Ethiopian Doro Wat

Chicken drumsticks and hard-boiled eggs braised deep into a caramelized onion and berbere stew — a dish of extraordinary depth built not from stock but from patience, red onion, and spice.

Time 180 min **Servings** 4

What you'll need.

- ☐ 900 g Chicken drumsticks (or bone-in thighs)
- ☐ 600 g Red onions, very finely diced
- ☐ 60 g Niter kibbeh (Ethiopian spiced clarified butter)
- ☐ 15 g Fresh ginger, grated
- ☐ 10 g Salt
- ☐ 4 whole Hard-boiled eggs, peeled and scored
- ☐ 40 g Berbere spice blend
- ☐ 20 g Garlic cloves, minced
- ☐ 20 ml Fresh lemon juice
- ☐ 200 ml Water or chicken stock

Let's make it.

01 In a large, heavy pot or Dutch oven, add the finely diced red onions with absolutely no fat. Cook over medium heat, stirring every few minutes, for 35–45 minutes. Yes, dry — no oil, no butter. The onions will first release their water, steam, shrink dramatically, then slowly begin to caramelize in their own sugars. This slow, dry process is the soul of doro wat — it builds a deep, sweet, savory base that no stock can replicate. The onions must go from raw purple to a dark, jammy, mahogany mass before any fat is added.

02 Add the niter kibbeh to the dark onion base and stir to incorporate. Add the minced garlic and grated ginger and stir for 1 minute. Add the berbere spice blend all at once and stir continuously for 2–3 minutes over medium heat — the spices must toast in the fat to bloom their fat-soluble compounds. The mass will look quite dry and very dark. This is correct. Add the water and stir to create a thick, ruddy sauce.

03 Add the chicken pieces to the berbere base and turn to coat thoroughly. Add any remaining water and the salt. Cover and cook over medium-low heat for 45 minutes, turning the chicken every 15 minutes. After 45 minutes, score the hard-boiled eggs with a knife (4–6 shallow cuts through the white) and nestle them into the stew — the cuts allow the sauce to penetrate the eggs. Uncover and cook for a final 20 minutes to reduce the sauce. Add the lemon juice in the last 5 minutes. The finished doro wat should be dark, deeply flavored, and thick enough to hold its shape on injera.

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Servings are an estimate; check quantities in the source recipe.
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