

### Basic Ingredients

3 pounds very small potatoes, unpeeled

3 cups soft whole-wheat berries

2 lamb shanks or two pounds lamb necks

1 turkey thigh

2 pounds beef neck bones

Good pinch saffron threads

1 teaspoon turmeric

### Instructions

Place the ingredients in a crockpot or in another heavy pot (consider pacing the grain in a separate cheesecloth bag, see above). Add about 10 cups water. Plug in the crockpot just before Shabbos (if you are using a regular pot, bring it to a boil just before Shabbos). Leave the cholent on a low temperature setting. Makes a good eight servings.

### Cholent Variations:

I am highlighting all the variations that will work for Passover: who knows, you might get even more attached to that week's cholent than to the one you eat year round!

- Other bean and grain choices: Substitute for the wheat berries, in any combination: Spelt berries, barley, wild rice, chick peas, mung, aduki, oats, etc.... All excellent choices, and many gluten-free. The other beans you are used to (you know what they are!), I find them, um, how can I say it politely, environmentally unsafe for cholent, as my son calls them with a wink. The long cooking time takes out the worst in them whereas they might be perfectly OK in a bean soup, or in a dish of rice and beans, or a bean salad. Your cholent will be delicious and more digestible without them, I assure you! Still, if a bean cholent is what you want, enjoy it!

- If you want to use all turkey parts, use 2 to 3 turkey thighs, plus 3 tablespoons oil. Turkey parts are a much better choice than chicken parts, as they take better to the long, slow cooking. You can also use all lamb, or all beef or all bison chunks in any combination you like, but no added oil.

- For a delicious gelatinous texture, throw in a calf's foot. We Moroccans love that.

- Make it with beef tongue. You will peel it at serving time.

- Make a vegetable mixture (affectionately called "kishka"): 2 grated sweet potatoes, 1/2 cup raisins, 1 small chopped onion, 2 tablespoons oil, 1/2 cup ground almonds, cinnamon and salt and pepper to taste. Shape into a log, wrap in cheesecloth, tie the ends, and throw in the pot. Perfect for Passover!

- Add a few unpeeled eggs. Peel them at serving time. they come out very dark.
- Add a couple of heads of garlic. The cloves will get incredibly sweet and tasty during cooking.
- Make a ground meat mixture: Sephardis love this. 1 pound lean ground meat (turkey, bison, beef or lamb), 6 large cloves of chopped garlic, 1 small bunch of minced parsley, 1/4 cup of raw brown rice, 1 egg, ground pepper and a pinch of nutmeg. Shape into a log, wrap in cheesecloth, tie the ends, and throw in the pot. Passover: Use quinoa instead of the rice
- Low carb: Omit the wheat and potatoes. Add 2 bunches of celery, ribs separated, peeled and cut in 3-inch chunks. Place in the bottom of the pan with the meat and seasoning on top. Do not add any water (repeat: No water). Perfect for Passover
- Throw in a couple sweet potatoes cut in large chunks.
- Throw in a dozen pitted dates.
- Replace some of the water with a couple cans of beer.
- Vegetable Cholent: Choose vegetables that stand up to the long cooking time: small potatoes left whole and unpeeled, mushrooms, garlic, onions, carrots, turnips, celery root, cut in large chunks, canned or fresh crushed tomatoes, herbs of your choice, dry red wine or sake. Perfect for Passover!
- All Vegetarian Cholent: Any of the above selections with no meat, or with the addition of seitan, unflavored.
- Cholent as Soup: Any of the above selections, with 6-8 cups more water. Serve in soup bowls.
- What to do with leftover cholent: Don't throw it out, and don't leave it as is: What worked Saturday might not work Monday! Add to it some water, crushed tomatoes, red wine, oregano, cumin, paprika, even a handful chocolate chips, and you have yourself a delicious bean soup. Who would guess this is a recycled dish, and if they do, if you can recycle in such style, then more power to you!