

## Sicilian Seafood Stew with Almonds and Couscous

Serves 4 to 6;  PAGE 66  
TOTAL: 1 HR. 10 MIN.

In western Sicily, couscous is often served as an appetizer. Here, a bounty of local seafood—swordfish, shrimp, calamari, and mussels—is piled on top for a hearty main course. The cooking liquid, a fragrant tomato-seafood broth, is rich and flavorful, so be sure to serve the seafood and couscous doused with plenty of it—the couscous will soak much of it up.

- ½ cup olive oil
- 1 celery stalk, minced
- 1 medium red bell pepper, stemmed, seeded, and minced
- 1 medium yellow onion, minced
- 1 small carrot, minced
- 2 Tbsp. tomato paste
- 2 vine-ripe tomatoes, cored, seeded, and finely chopped
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 zucchini, halved lengthwise and sliced  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch thick
- 4 cups fish stock
- ½ tsp. saffron threads
- 8 oz. swordfish, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 8 oz. small head-on shrimp
- 1 lb. mussels, cleaned
- 1 lb. calamari bodies and tentacles, bodies cut into  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch rings
- 1 lb. cockles, cleaned
- ½ cup whole toasted almonds, finely chopped

Add the celery, bell pepper, onion, and carrot and cook, stirring, until soft, about 12 minutes. Add the tomato paste and cook, stirring, for 2 minutes. Increase the heat to high, add the tomatoes, garlic, and zucchini, and cook, stirring, until they start to brown lightly, about 2 minutes. Pour in the fish stock and saffron and bring to a boil.

**2** Arrange the swordfish in the stock, followed by, in this order, the shrimp, mussels, calamari, and cockles, then cover the pan and cook, shaking the pan occasionally, until the fish and shrimp are cooked through and the mussels and cockles open, about 10 minutes.

**3** Remove the soup from the heat, stir in the almonds, parsley, and pine nuts, and season with salt and pepper. Divide the couscous among serving plates, shaping it into a mound, then ladle over the vegetables, broth, and seafood to serve.

## Caponata

Makes 5 cups  
TOTAL: 1 HR. 40 MIN.

The sweet and sour flavors—or agrodolce—of this caponata come from sugar and vinegar, which have historically been used to preserve Sicilian relishes and are typically included in the island's traditional vegetable and seafood dishes. To ensure a well-caramelized eggplant that is still creamy inside, toss it with salt before frying it—this draws out the moisture and concentrates the flavor. Serve on bread, tossed with pasta.