

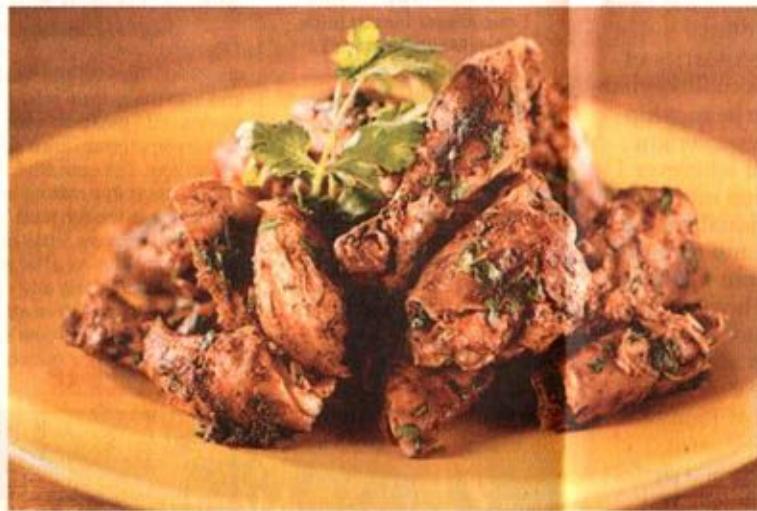
Sindhi Choosas (Braised Cornish Hens)

Serves 6

This is a spicy dish, so use less cayenne and fewer chiles if you want moderate heat. Serve with Sukhe Aloo (see recipe).

- 3 Cornish hens
- 2 medium yellow onions quartered
- 6 cloves garlic coarsely chopped
- 2-inch piece ginger, peeled and coarsely chopped
- 3 to 4 green serrano chiles, coarsely chopped
- 6 black cardamom pods
- 2 sticks cinnamon, each about 2 inches long
- 2 dried bay leaves
- 8 whole cloves
- 8 to 10 black whole peppercorns
- 1½ teaspoons kosher salt
- 3 teaspoons ghee
- 3 tablespoons ground coriander
- 1 to 3 teaspoons cayenne, to taste
- ½ cup reserved poaching liquid
- 4 teaspoons amchur (dried green mango powder (optional; see Note), or squeeze of lemon or lime juice
- ½ cup chopped cilantro

Instructions: Skin and cut each hen into six pieces by disjointing the leg, thigh and breast pieces. Discard the wings or add to poaching liquid, if desired. Place the cut-up hens in a wide sauce pan, layering them with the



onions, garlic, ginger, chiles, cardamom, cinnamon, bay leaves, cloves and peppercorns. Sprinkle with the salt then add 4-5 cups cold water — just enough to cover the hens and seasonings.

Bring to a full boil, reduce heat to low, cover and simmer for about 1 hour, or until the hens are tender enough to pierce through with a fork. Reserve poaching liquid.

Place a non-stick skillet large enough to hold half of the hens over medium-high heat. Add half the ghee, tilt the pan so it pools, then add half of the ground coriander and 1 teaspoon cayenne. Place pan back onto the stove; add ¼ cup poaching liquid and blend to make a paste.

Immediately add half of the poached hens. If using amchur, sprinkle 1 teaspoon over the hens. Turn hens over and sprinkle another with another

teaspoon of the amchur and half the chopped cilantro. Turn pieces over once more, leaving them in the pan just enough to wilt the cilantro.

Arrange hens on a warm platter, cilantro side up. Lightly tent with foil to keep warm. Repeat with the remaining hens, and serve.

Note: You can find amchur in Indian markets. If it is unavailable, substitute a squeeze of fresh lemon or lime juice at the end of cooking each batch. The poaching liquid becomes a flavorful stock, which can be strained and reserved for another use.

Wine pairing: Go with a fruity Barbera if you want a red on the table. Otherwise a Soave will hold its own.

XNIP code: YGP3

Nutritional analysis

All recipes in the Food & Wine section have been tested by The Chronicle.

► The nutritional analysis that follows each recipe does not include optional ingredients.

► Garnishes, optional ingredients and suggested accompaniments are not included.

► When there is a range of servings, the larger number is used.

► If there is a range in the amount of an ingredient, the smaller amount is used.

► When a recipe lists a choice of ingredients (such as milk or cream), the first is used.