**

***Kitty’s Tagine of Butternut Squash***

***with Ras El Hanout Spice Blend in a Tomato Ragu***

*By Kitty Morse*

Over the years, I have had the distinct honor of mentoring with Kitty Morse. Learning how to cook with a tagine is for sure one of my highlights. Historically, a tagine was used over an open fire. Think BBQ with some North African style and flair. Today, you can easily find this clayware that is dishwasher, oven and stove top safe. *Ras El Hanut*, a traditional Moroccan spice blend, is considered to be the crown jewel spice of Moroccan cooking and has a beautiful aromatic fragrance. *Ras El Hanut* can be used with meat, fish, poultry and vegetarian stews to name a few. This Kitty inspired vegetarian dish is quite hardy and delicious!

**Ingredients:**

2 pounds butternut squash, pre-packaged & cubed is the easiest\*

2 tablespoons tomato paste

1 Tbsp. [***SPICE + LEAF Vegan Soup Powder***](http://www.spiceandleaf.com/shop)

1 cup Water

1-2 Tbsp. [**SPICE + LEAF Galili Premium Olive Oil**](http://www.spiceandleaf.com/shop)

2 garlic cloves, minced

1 (14 ¼ oz.) can diced tomatoes OR 4 medium tomatoes, peeled and coarsely chopped

1 (14 ¼ oz.) can garbanzo beans, liquid reserved

2 heaping tsp. [***SPICE + LEAF Ras El Hanout***](http://www.spiceandleaf.com/shop)

1 teaspoon salt

15 sprigs parsley, tied with string

Freshly ground pepper to taste (optional)

Parsley leaves, for garnish

**Instructions:**

In a small bowl, whisk together the tomato paste and water, vegan soup powder. Set aside.

In a large pot (or tagine) over medium heat, lightly sauté chopped garlic in olive oil for 1-2 minutes. Combine tomatoes, butternut squash, garbanzo beans, and *ras el hanout*. Add the broth mixture. Mix together. Place parsley on top. Cover and cook until the squash is tender with a fork, 15 - 20 minutes. Discard the cooked parsley. Season with salt and pepper. Transfer to a serving bowl or use your tagine, and top with fresh parsley chopped, if desired. Serve hot. Excellent with couscous!!

**\***NOTE: To prep an entire squash, preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Set the squash on a baking sheet, and cook until almost tender about 25 minutes. This makes it easier to peel. Remove from the oven, and let cool. Peel the squash and remove the seeds. Cut it into 2-inch cubes.

Recipe Courtesy of Kitty Morse; Adapted from *The Vegetarian Table: North Africa* by Kitty Morse. Chronicle Books, 1998.