

Couscous with Roasted Eggplant, Cherry Tomatoes, Moroccan Olives and Harissa

I know with the release of our 2008 Rosato that summer can not be far behind and along with those warm months come lazy days spent in the garden with family and friends. This dish pairs beautifully with the crisp acidity of Rose wines...olives, eggplant tomatoes and a hint of spice are perfect for this wine and the ease of the dish is perfect for a day of entertaining...just pair it with simply grilled fish or chicken and a crisp salad for a great meal with friends and family...don't forget the chilled Rosato.

Harissa is a North African condiment...spicy but flavorful. It is widely available in ethnic markets in jars or tubes but it is very easy to make your own and lasts for quite awhile in the fridge. Harissa is great as a rub for seafood and meat.

Harissa

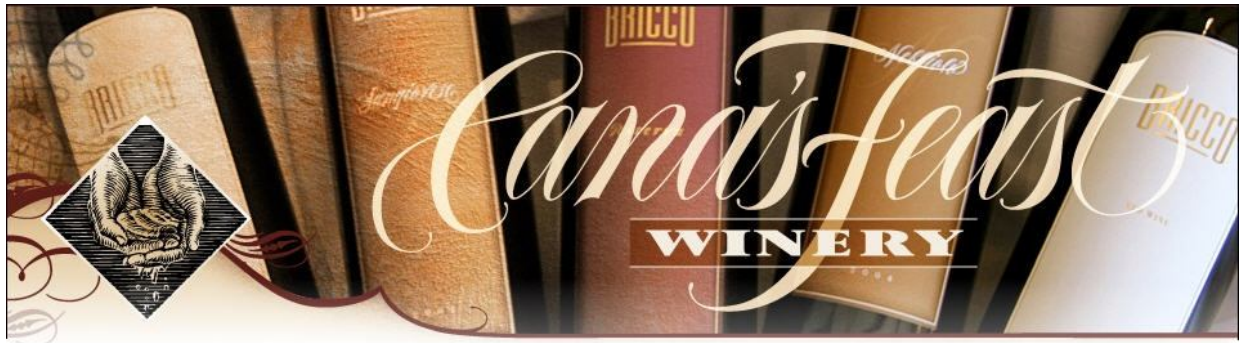
- 1 teaspoon cumin seed
- ½ teaspoon coriander seeds
- ½ teaspoon caraway seeds
- 2 arbol chilies
- 1 red bell pepper roasted
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- ½ teaspoon sea salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 2 tablespoons olive oil

Combine seeds and chilies in a spice grinder and grind to a medium fine texture. Place the roasted red pepper into a food processor with the garlic, salt and ground seed mixture. Process the mixture to a paste, add the olive oil, and pulse once or twice to combine and season with more salt and pepper if needed.

Couscous

- 1 medium eggplant, chopped into a medium dice
- Olive oil
- 2 cups couscous
- 2 cups boiling vegetable stock
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon orange zest
- 3 tablespoons freshly squeezed orange juice
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 teaspoons Harissa paste
- 1 pint cherry or grape tomatoes, halved
- ½ cup Moroccan olives, chopped
- 2 tablespoons fresh basil, chopped
- 1 tablespoon fresh mint, chopped

Pre-heat oven to 375 degrees



Place eggplant on a baking sheet and drizzle with enough olive oil to coat and season with salt and pepper. Place the sheet pan in the oven; roast the eggplant for 15-20 minutes, stirring the eggplant every 10 minutes until golden brown and soft. Remove from the oven and reserve.

Place couscous in a large stainless bowl, Pour the boiling vegetable stock over the couscous and cover with plastic wrap. Let the couscous stand for 5-10 minutes until all the stock has been absorbed. Use a fork to scrape the surface of the couscous until most of the grains are separate. It is fine if the couscous seems dry at this point: it will moisten when the dressing is added.

In a small bowl whisk together the orange zest and juice, olive oil, and Harissa, season with salt and pepper to taste. Pour the mixture over the couscous and stir to combine. Add the reserved eggplant, tomatoes, olives, basil and mint. Gently mix the vegetables into the dressed couscous. Adjust seasonings if necessary. Transfer couscous to a platter for serving.

Yields six servings

Lisa Lanxon/Chef/Cana's Feast Winery