



Culinary Institute
of America

Mediterranean Cuisine

North Africa: Tunisia and Morocco



Learning Objectives

- Discuss the geography and climate of Morocco and Tunisia.
- Describe the important influences on the cuisine of Morocco and Tunisia.
- Differentiate between Moroccan and Tunisian flavor profiles.
- Identify the key ingredients of Morocco and Tunisia.
- List and describe some important specialty items of North Africa.
- Identify well known dishes of Morocco and Tunisia .
- Differentiate between Moroccan and Tunisian “tagine”.

Geography of Morocco

- **Rabat:** capital city
- Generally Mediterranean climate, besides the desert
- **Atlas Mountains:** rustic, hearty dishes for colder climates and pastures
- **Mediterranean Sea:** seafood, fresh herbs; light, flavorful dishes
- **Sahara Desert:** sparsely populated, harsh conditions; preservation techniques, limited water



Moroccan Cuisine



- Known for rich, spicy, flavorful dishes
- Influenced by Berber, Arab, Andalusian, Mediterranean, African
- **Distinctive flavors:** preserved lemons, fresh herbs, dried fruits, ginger, peppers, cumin, 30 ingredient spice blend (*ras el hanout*)
- **Staples:** couscous, lamb, olive oil, garlic, tomatoes, chickpeas
- **Cooking method:** slow-cooking
- **Equipment:** couscoussier, pot for slow-cooking (*tagine*), skewers (*sikh*), flatbread griddle (*mihfa*)

Moroccan Flavor Profile

Flavor profile: sweet, spicy, earthy, bright

- Cinnamon + coriander + cumin
- Chili peppers + garlic + olive oil + salt (harissa)
- Eggplant + cinnamon + mint
- Green tea + dried spearmint + sugar
- Lamb + cinnamon + honey + prunes
- Oranges + cinnamon + honey
- Parsley + lemon juice + olive oil
- Phyllo dough + almonds + cinnamon + honey
- Phyllo dough + honey + sesame seeds



Key Moroccan Ingredients



- **Grain:** wheat, barley, cous cous, phyllo
- **Vegetables:** peppers, squash, yams, onions, potatoes, tomatoes, cucumber, carrots
- **Fruit:** olives, apricots, dates, figs, lemons, prunes, raisins
- **Herbs and spices:** cinammon, coriander, cloves, cumin, mint, parsley, tumeric, ginger, garlic, saffron, sumac, paprika
- **Flowers:** roses
- **Legumes:** chickpeas, lentils
- **Nuts/ seeds:** almonds, sesame, pistachios
- **Dairy:** butter, yogurt, eggs
- **Meat:** Poultry, cattle, sheep, lamb
- Honey

Specialty Items of Morocco

- **Tagine:** simmered “ragouts” in conical earthenware pots
 - Chicken, pigeon, turkey, or lamb; spices, peppers, chickpeas
 - Served with rice or couscous
- **Ras el Hanout:** means “head of the shop”
 - Contains cinnamon, turmeric, pepper, nutmeg, cardamom, cloves
- **Preserved lemons:** indispensable ingredient, only the rind is used
 - Tagines, vegetable dishes, dressings, sauces



Popular Moroccan Dishes



B'stilla:
Moroccan
chicken pie



Harira:
lentil &
chickpea soup



Tagine:
chicken braised
with spices, garlic,
onion, olives,
preserved lemons

Geography of Tunisia

- **Tunis:** capitol city
- Irregular precipitation because of desert; hot and dry
- **Mediterranean coast:** light, fresh, seafood-heavy
- **Central Plains:** simple, filling, traditional
- **Sahara:** fire-cooking, preservation
- **Atlas mountains:** hearty, rural, cooler climate



Tunisian Cuisine

- Fresh, seasonal ingredients & tangy flavors
- Influenced by the Berbers, Arabs, French, Sicilians
- Always fresh bread available at all meals
- **Staples:** olive oil, couscous, lamb, seafood, tomatoes, chickpeas, yogurt, khobz bread, seafood, lamb, goats, calves
- **Seasonings:** harissa, cumin, coriander garlic, caraway, mint, cilantro
- **Cooking methods:** stewing, grilling, preserving
- **Equipment:** couscoussier, tajine, clay pot (*m'khoukh*)



Tunisian Flavor Profiles

Flavor Profile: Strong, pungent, zesty

- **Tabil:** Coriander + garlic + caraway + cayenne
 - "Seasonings"; used for soups, stews, meatballs
- **Harissa:** Chili + garlic + caraway + coriander + olive oil
 - Condiment; chili paste
- **Baharat:** Cinnamon + dried rose petals + black pepper
 - "Mixed spices", flavor meat

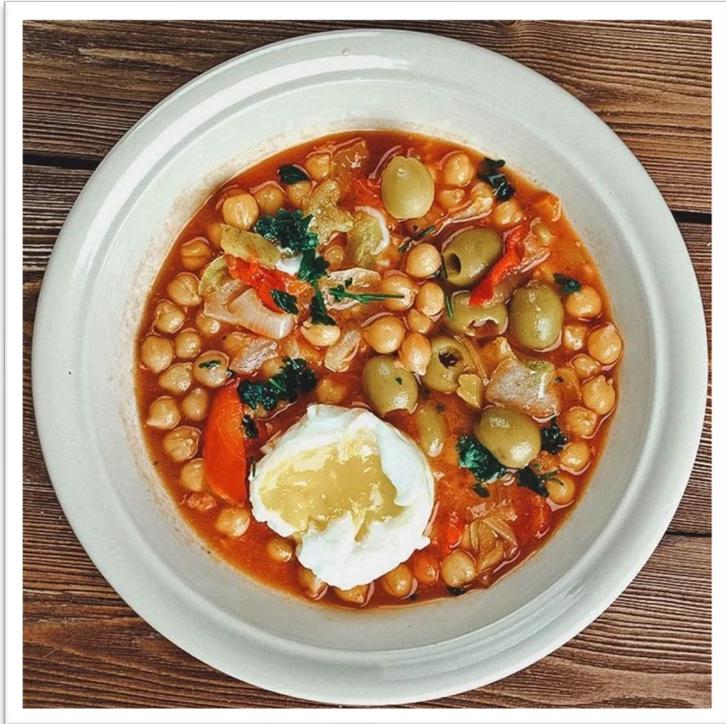


Key Tunisian Ingredients



- **Vegetables:** garlic, hot + bell peppers, onions, tomatoes, turnips, yams, okra
- **Fruit:** apricots, olives, grapes, lemons, dates
- **Flowers:** roses, jasmine, orange flower
- **Herbs and spices:** caraway, mint, cilantro, fennel, parsley, fenugreek, ginger, cayenne, anise, saffron, paprika, turmeric
- **Legumes:** chickpeas, lentils
- **Meat/ poultry:** Lamb, goat, rabbit, squab
- **Seafood:** tuna, anchovies, red mullet, shellfish

Popular Tunisian Dishes



Lablabi:
dried chickpeas served
in a thin, garlic &
cumin-flavored broth



Kaftaji:
fried vegetables mixed
with fried eggs,
seasoned with harissa



Tunisian brik:
pastry stuffed with
potato, tuna, egg

Moroccan and Tunisian "*Tagine*"

- **Moroccan:** slow-cooked meat stew with vegetables, fruit, spices; cooked with conical clay pot
- **Tunisian:** egg-based, variety of vegetables, addition of chickpeas, cooked without conical lid





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Any Questions?