

## Food For Thought: November Putting Afghan Women Back in Power

### In This Issue of Food for Thought:

- ♀ Millennium Development Goals
- ♀ Monthly Theme
- ♀ Discussion Questions
- ♀ Voices: In Her Own Words
- ♀ Recommended Books, Films and Videos
- ♀ Fair Trade Shopping
- ♀ Afghan Recipes

*“They made me invisible, shrouded and non-being  
A shadow, no existence, made silent and unseeing  
Denied of freedom, confined to my cage  
Tell me how to handle my anger and my rage?”*

-- Zieba Shorish-Shamley, from *Look into my World* published on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights

### United Nations Millennium Development Goals

#### Goal 3: Promote Gender Equality & Empower Women<sup>1</sup>

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are eight objectives designed by the UN to improve social and economic conditions in developing countries by the end of 2015. The UN hopes to use education as a means for empowering women and have identified several ways in which a gender disparity in education has hindered women’s success.

- For Afghan girls in some regions, education remains elusive, even forbidden.
- Poverty is a major barrier to education, especially among older Afghan girls.
- Afghan Women are slowly rising to political power, but usually only when quotas and other special measures are enforced.



### Goal 5: Improve Maternal Health

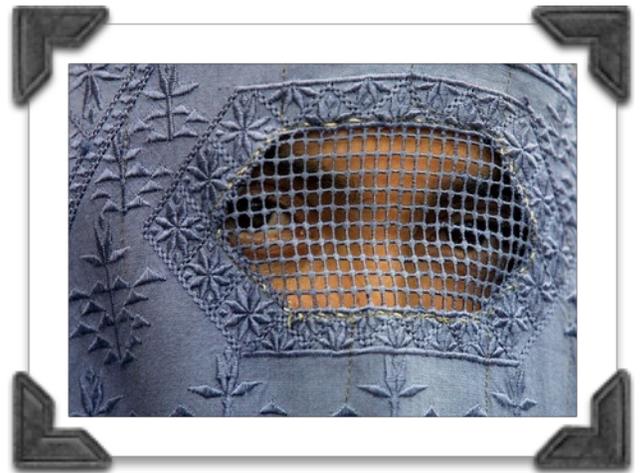
The UN recognizes that most maternal deaths can be avoided. **Giving birth is especially risky in Southern Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, where skilled care is lacking.** Poverty and a lack of education also lead to high adolescent birth risks, and use of contraception is lowest among the poorest women and those with no education. **The Badakhshan Province in northeastern Afghanistan has the highest maternal morbidity rate in the world.**

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**The Root of the Inequality Problem:** In 1996, the Taliban seized Kabul, forcing Afghanistan under its control and stripping women of their basic human rights. Although the Taliban claims to enforce Islamic law, the Qur'an nowhere states that women should be treated inferior to their fathers or husbands. In fact, "Marriage in Islam is based on mutual peace, love, and compassion, not just the satisfaction of man's needs"<sup>2</sup>

**However, under the Taliban, women were:**

- Banished women from the work force<sup>3</sup>
- Banned from schools and expelled from universities<sup>2</sup>
- Prohibited from leaving their homes unless accompanied by a close male relative<sup>2</sup>
- Stoned to death if accused of adultery<sup>2</sup>
- Publicly beaten for wearing nail polish<sup>2</sup>
- Ordered to paint publicly visible windows of their houses black
- Forced to wear the burqa (or *chadari*) - which completely shrouds the body, leaving only a small mesh-covered opening through which to see
- Prohibited from being examined by male physicians while at the same time female doctors and nurses were forbidden from working<sup>4</sup>



**2004 Constitution:** Until the early 1990s, women contributed greatly to Afghan society.

Although health statistics weren't good, women were not held back by a patriarchal society.

**"Women helped to draft the 1964 Constitution. In the 1970s, there were at least three women legislators in the Parliament. Up to the early 1990s, women were teachers, government workers and medical doctors. They worked as professors, lawyers, judges, journalists, writers and poets."**<sup>5</sup> With the encouragement of the United States and the UN, the newly-established Afghan government has begun to hand women back their rights. The 2004 Constitution, arguably the most progressive document in terms of gender equality in the Islamic world, states: "The citizens of Afghanistan, man and woman, have equal rights and duties before the law."<sup>6</sup> (Article 22).

### Post-Taliban Achievements:

- The political and cultural status of women has undoubtedly improved. Women have been returning to work, **the government no longer mandates the wear of burquas**, and have even been appointed to important positions in government.<sup>7</sup>
- In the beginning of August, a new class of 16 policewomen graduated from a U.S.-funded police academy.



- **Article 83 of the new constitution mandates that 25% of the seats in Parliament go to women.**<sup>8</sup>
- **In 2007, the supreme court of Afghanistan approved a 15-page formal contract to end child marriages.** Although the legal age had already been 16 for girls and 18 for boys, **UNICEF estimates that 57% of marriages in Afghanistan had involved girls below age 16.** Now, law requires that men seeking marriage should *prove* his bride is at least 16. Marriage certificates will not be issued for underage brides. However, only 1-3 couples apply for formal marriage registration per day in a country of about 25 million people.

**A Long Way to Go:** New legislation provides the illusion that Afghanistan has made enormous progress toward women's rights; after all, the U.S. administration and the new Afghan government say that "worries are overblown."<sup>7</sup> But the issue of gender equality is far from over. **In southern Afghanistan, where the Taliban still retains its**

**influence, women receive "night letters," adorned with the symbol of the old Taliban regime, which warn them to resist returning to work or speaking out.**

Even in more secure areas of Afghanistan, **divorce is still a man's prerogative**, and a man can legally have up to four wives.

\*

In tribal areas, **women cannot receive medical treatment unless they are accompanied by their husbands** or a close male family member.

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Only 25% of their children live until age five.<sup>9</sup>

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The Badakhshan Province in **northeastern Afghanistan has the worst maternal health in the world**: maternal mortality is 1600 per 100,000 live births (in the U.S., the maternal mortality rate is 11 in 100,000)<sup>10</sup>

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In the Helmand Province in Southern Afghanistan, **only 29 midwives and three female doctors deliver obstetric services** to more than 450,000 women.<sup>11</sup>

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On average, an **Afghan woman gives birth to seven children.**

"We warn you to leave your job as a teacher as soon as possible otherwise we will cut the heads off your children and shall set fire to your daughter." And: "We will kill you in such a harsh way that no woman has so far been killed in that manner." ---*Time* magazine's reports of letters obtained by Human Rights Watch

**Helping Afghan Women:** Currently, security is the most significant issue in Afghanistan. It is difficult for the Afghan and U.S. governments to focus on human rights when the Afghan government is at war. Nonprofit organizations are helping women get back on their feet after three decades of warfare. **Many NGOs (nongovernmental organizations) are working in Afghanistan to empower women by, for example, training women to be health and birth attendants and selling crafts made by Afghan women.** Proceeds typically go back to the women. In a world of patriarchal rule and domestic violence, women can learn to support themselves without men through their crafts.

### Discussion Questions

1. In France, a recent “burqa ban” makes it illegal for women to wear in public the conservative muslim full facial veil. Some argue that forcing women to cover up their faces and bodies amounts to “sexual apartheid.” [In parts of Afghanistan local tradition dictates that women’s faces not be seen in public.] Others say the burqa ban is discriminatory, and patronizes women by not letting them decide for themselves. How do you feel about the role of women and the full-faced burqa?
2. In Afghanistan’s current political climate, what additional steps could be taken to help women gain political power?
3. Many organizations, such as Rubia, operate in Afghanistan by agreeing to work inside the pre-established social system, *even if those cultural norms repress women*. For example, a society that does not allow illiterate women to be educated, typically supports the learning of new skills, such as sewing, which will help a family economically. What kind of challenges might this cause for the organization and its staff?



“The Taliban pounded on the door just before midnight, demanding that Aisha, 18, be punished for running away from her husband’s house. They dragged her to a mountain clearing near her village in the southern Afghan province of Uruzgan, ignoring her protests that her in-laws had been abusive, that she had no choice but to escape. Shivering in the cold air and blinded by the flashlights trained on her by her husband’s family, she faced her spouse and accuser. Her in-laws treated her like a slave, Aisha pleaded. They beat her. If she hadn’t run away, she would have died. Her judge, a local Taliban commander, was unmoved. Later, he would tell Aisha’s uncle that she had to be made an example of lest other girls in the village try to do the same thing. The commander gave his verdict, and men moved in to deliver the punishment. Aisha’s brother-in-law held her down while her husband pulled out a knife. First he sliced off her ears. Then he started on her nose. Aisha passed out from the pain but awoke soon after, choking on her own blood. The men had left her on the mountainside to die...This didn’t happen 10 years ago, when the Taliban ruled Afghanistan. It happened last year. Now hidden in a secret women’s shelter in the relative safety of Kabul, where she was taken after receiving care from U.S. forces, Aisha recount[ed] her tale in a monotone, her eyes flat and distant.” --Aryn Baker, “What Happens if We Leave Afghanistan” *Time Magazine*, August 2010

## Voices

### *Jahan*

Jahan's name means "world," and her work with Rubia has indeed expanded her world in ways she never could have imagined. Part of the Rubia team since the very beginning, in 2000, joining Rubia rescued her from the squalor and poverty of refugee life in Lahore, Pakistan. Jahan's stitching experience stems back to pre-conflict Afghanistan, when she learned to embroider from her own mother. Her elegant signature adorns many of Rubia's embroideries. In true Afghan tradition, Jahan has imparted her sewing talents to her daughters, now some of Rubia's finest artisans. One of the few literate women, she has taken on increasingly responsible roles in Rubia. Jahan recently became the production director, overseeing embroidery production. Quality control is an enormous challenge, particularly among women whose notions of color, pattern, design and standards vary hugely. Jahan's new role has given her critical managerial experience, a "transferable" skill that few women manage to acquire.



### *Hafiza*

As the youngest child of her father's third wife, Hafiza grew up the adored daughter, surrounded by attention. Her father, an important local politician, was killed when she was still very young. Her mother, nine brothers, and her mother's co-wives all concerned themselves with raising her as best they could, even managing to send her to school - an extraordinarily rare event. Still, her brothers married her off to a local man, a relative. After the Soviet

invasion, her family's property was seized and her brothers escaped to Europe. Though they invited her to join them, her father-in-law refused to allow her to go. Instead, she was condemned to the life of fear, hunger and displacement, ultimately making her way with her husband and children to Lahore, Pakistan, as penniless refugees. However, whereas some men managed to scrape by through drug and weapon smuggling, Hafiza's husband could not manage even this, as he had lost a leg to a landmine. Rubia was a salvation for Hafiza and her family, and she quickly became the director of the women's program. Rubia also was able to offer employment to her husband. Now **Hafiza works in Kabul, where she runs the 'stitch therapy' program at a women's drug treatment center.** Her income from Rubia has allowed her to educate her sons and daughters, the oldest of whom are high school graduates. The mother of eight children, Hafiza was determined to provide a better life for her children and two of her daughters are college students, the first girls from her village ever to accomplish this feat.

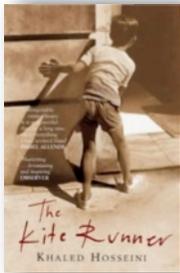


## **Alabim**

Rubia has tried to incorporate a wide range of members of the community into its programming. The two literate women described above have been trained to take leadership roles. However, others with fewer skills and more limitations have played important roles as well. For example, Alabim has been blind since childhood. As a blind woman, she was unable to attract a husband and has lived her life totally dependent upon relatives for all her needs. Rubia has provided her with an income and a sense of purpose for the first time in her life. To the delight and wonder of the women in the community, she is able to sort and divide tangled silk threads to prepare them for the embroiderers.

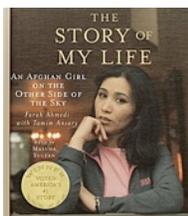


## **Recommended Books**



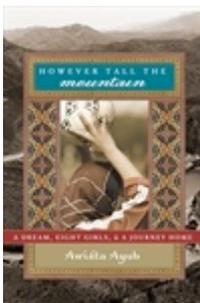
**Fiction: *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini:** "I became what I am today at the age of twelve, on a frigid overcast day in the winter of 1975." So begins *The Kite Runner*, a poignant tale of two motherless boys growing up in Kabul, a city teetering on the brink of destruction at the dawn of the Soviet invasion. Hosseini's depiction of the cruelty children suffer at the hands of their "friends" will break your heart. And his descriptions of Afghanistan both before and after the war will haunt readers long after they've read the last page. --*Summer 2003 Selection, Barnes & Noble Discover Great New Writers*

## **Nonfiction: *The Story of My Life: An Afghan Girl on the Other Side of The Sky* by Farah Ahmedi and Tamim Ansary**



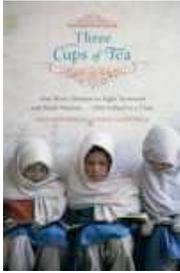
Farah Ahmedi is born into the world just as the war between the mujahideen and the Soviets reaches its peak in Afghanistan. When Farah steps on a land mine on her way to school, her world becomes much smaller than the dreams and hopes in her heart. She begins to learn -- slowly -- that ordinary people, often strangers, have immense power to save lives and restore hope. --Barnes & Noble

## **However Tall The Mountain: A Dream, Eight Girls and a Journey Home** by Awista Ayub



A group of Afghan girls are introduced to soccer American-style in this subtly composed, eye-opening tale of cultural clash and transformation. The author—the director of the Afghan Youth Sports Exchange whose own family emigrated from Kabul to Connecticut when the Soviet-backed coup took over the country in 1978—first sponsored eight Afghan girls to come to America to play soccer for six weeks in 2004. The girls spent six weeks at soccer camps in America—in Washington, D.C.; Connecticut; and Cleveland—playing soccer publicly for the first time.--*Publisher's Weekly*

### **Three Cups of Tea by Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin**



In 1993, Mortenson was sheltered for seven weeks by the small Pakistani village of Korphe; in return, he promised to build the impoverished town's first school, a project that grew into the Central Asia Institute, which has since constructed more than 50 schools across rural Pakistan and Afghanistan. As the book moves into the post-9/11 world, Mortenson and Relin argue that the United States must fight Islamic extremism in the region through collaborative efforts to alleviate poverty and improve access to education, especially for girls.--

*Publisher's Weekly*

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### **Films & Videos**



***Afghanistan Unveiled.*** Filmed by the first ever team of women video journalists trained in Afghanistan, this rare and uncompromising film explores the effects of the Taliban's repressive rule and recent U.S.-sponsored bombing campaign on Afghani women.--*Women Make Movies*, [www.wmm.com](http://www.wmm.com). A film by [Brigitte Brault](#) & [Aina Women Filming Group](#). Afghanistan, 2003, 52 minutes, Color, VHS/DVD, French, Subtitled. Preview available at:

<http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/afghanistanunveiled/film.html>



***Osama.*** This powerful and remarkable drama chronicles the true story of a young girl in Taliban-ruled Afghanistan who must disguise herself as a boy to save her family from starvation. The first feature film made in Afghanistan in the post-Taliban era. Metro Goldwyn Mayer Home Entertainment, DVD.

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### **Fair Trade Shopping**



Beautiful placemats, women-artisan crafted

<http://www.artizansarai.com/scat.asp?c=HD&sc=>

Coasters

<http://www.globalgoodspartners.org/cart/Details.cfm?ProdID=161>

And from one of my very favorite companies - **Creative Women**, the most beautiful scarves you have ever seen! Expensive and worth every penny!

The do not normally sell direct to the public, but tell Amy or Ellen that you heard about it from Carolyn Mayers, and you will be good to go! <http://www.creativewomen.net/AfghanSilk.html>

*Fair Trade shopping suggestions Provided by Carolyn Mayers*

## Recipes: Afghanistan Cuisine

This link will take you to everything you wanted to know about the food of Afghanistan, including recipes: [http://www.inmamaskitchen.com/FOOD\\_IS\\_ART\\_II/food\\_history\\_and\\_facts/afganistan\\_cooking/afghan\\_cooking.html](http://www.inmamaskitchen.com/FOOD_IS_ART_II/food_history_and_facts/afganistan_cooking/afghan_cooking.html)



### Recipes and more!

In addition to the new recipes given below, these two links will take you to back issues of **Food for Thought** that have even more information on Afghani cooking and food, and more great recipes. The second one is loaded with information. Enjoy.

<http://www.diningforwomen.org/sites/default/files/documents/creatinghopeinafghanistanFFT.pdf>

<http://www.diningforwomen.org/sites/default/files/MC%20Parwaz5-08Afghanistan.pdf> - tons of good stuff in here.

### MENU

*Qorma e Gulpea* (Tender Afghan Cauliflower Curry) note: cabbage may be used.

*Afghan Dal* (Cooked Lentils) with Ginger and Cumin

*Kadu Bouuranee* (Savory Winter Squash/Pumpkin with Yogurt)

*Mashawa* (Afghan Chili)

*Lawang* (Turmeric Braised chicken in Yogurt)

*Asabia el Aroos* (Brides Fingers) and more

**The traditional mode of eating in Afghanistan is on the floor.** Everyone sits around on large colorful cushions, called *toshak*. These cushions are normally placed on the beautiful carpets, for which Afghanistan is famous. A large cloth or thin mat called a *disterkhan* is spread over the floor or carpet before the dishes of food are brought. In summer, food is often served outside in the cooler night air, or under a shady tree during the day. In the depth of winter food is eaten around the *sandali*, the traditional form of Afghan heating. A *sandali* consists of a low table covered with a large duvet called a *liaf* which is also big enough to cover the legs of the occupants, sitting on their cushions or mattresses and supported by large pillows called *balesht* or *poshty*. Under the table is a charcoal brazier called a *manqal*. The charcoal has to be thoroughly burned previously and covered with ashes.

**Food is usually shared communally; three or four people will share one large platter of rice and individual [side dishes](#)** of stew *qorma*, or vegetables. Home made chutneys, pickles, as well as fresh nan usually accompany the food.

**The traditional way of eating is with the right hand, and with no cutlery.** Spoons may be used for puddings and teaspoons for tea. Because hands are used in eating there is a handwashing ceremony before [meals](#) and for this a special bowl and jug called a *haftawa-wa-lagan* is used. A young boy or girl member of the family brings this to the guest, and pours the water over his hands for him, the bowl being used to catch the water.

Excerpted from [www.inmamaskitchen.com](http://www.inmamaskitchen.com)

### Qorma e Gulpea (Tender Afghan Cauliflower Curry)

Adapted from <http://www.afghancooking.net/afghan-cooking-unveiled/vegetables-beans-and-peas/>

Actually I got quite a few of the recipes from this site. Go through it and have fun. There is lots of great information and really great recipes! I made this one with cabbage because my husband refuses to touch cauliflower! It was delicious, and the cooking time is slightly shorter.

Serves 4 – 6

3T olive oil

2 medium onions, minced or finely chopped in food processor

2T fresh ginger, minced

6 or more cloves garlic, minced

1t curry powder

1t ground coriander

1t turmeric

½ - 1t salt, to taste

½ c tomato sauce, or a couple of tablespoons of tomato paste mixed with water

½ c water, chicken broth or vegetable broth

½ t ground black pepper, or more to taste

1 head cauliflower, broken into bite size pieces, OR 1 small head cabbage, cut into 1 ½ - inch pieces



In a medium-large heavy pot, heat the oil over medium heat. Add the onions and cook, stirring, for about 10 minutes until they are soft. Add the ginger and cook for one minute. Add the garlic, curry powder, coriander and turmeric and stir. Add the salt, tomato sauce, broth or water and pepper and stir well to combine. Simmer about 5 minutes, or until thickened. Add the cauliflower or cabbage and stir well to combine. If the sauce seems a little skimpy, add a bit more water or broth. Reduce heat to low, cover the pot and cook, stirring occasionally, about 20 – 25 minutes or until the vegetables are almost as tender as you want them. Remove the cover, increase heat slightly and cook a few more minutes to thicken the sauce a bit. The vegetables should be tender but not completely falling apart. Serve with naan, pita bread or rice. Also try it with a dab of yogurt on top if you like. Pretty!

### Afghan Dal with Ginger and Cumin



Since I made this recipe exactly the way the recipe called for, please refer to the link for the recipe given above. This delicious recipe is on the same page, along with many others. An excellent dal!

Serves 6 – 8

### Kadu Bouranee (Savory Winter Squash/Pumpkin with Yogurt)



Adapted from the above site and a recipe at <http://friends.sspl.org/recipes.html> Another site with some great recipes. It's fall and at our house that means the winter squash is abundant. This and the chicken were our favorites this time around. And very pretty together on the same plate, too – creamy yellow and orange-red. An absolutely delicious dish and could serve as a vegetarian main course. Just add rice or naan and you are good to go. A comforting dish. Alternately, rather than cooking this in the oven, the squash could be added back to the pan containing the sauce and cooked for

about 25 minutes on top of the stove, covered. One less pan.

Serves 6.

4T olive oil, divided  
3c butternut squash or pie pumpkin, seeded, peeled and cut into approx. 2-inch cubes  
1c onion, minced, either by hand or in the food processor  
1T fresh ginger, minced  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
1t ground cardamom  
1t ground coriander  
pinch to 1/8t cayenne pepper  
2t turmeric  
1 – 14oz. can tomato sauce, or 4T tomato paste mixed with about 1 ¼ c water  
½ t salt, or more to taste  
2T sugar

#### **Yogurt Sauce – NOTE: if you are making the chili below, double this recipe!**

2 cloves minced garlic  
¼ t salt  
¾ c plain yogurt

Preheat oven to 350. Grease a medium baking dish. Heat 2T oil in a heavy skillet over medium heat and add cubed squash or pumpkin. Saute for about 8 minutes, until it starts to brown. Remove pumpkin to baking dish. Add remaining oil to pan, heat over medium heat and add onion. Cook onion for 8 minutes until soft. Add ginger and garlic and cook 1 minute. Add cardamom, coriander, cayenne and turmeric and stir. Add tomato sauce, sugar and salt, stir well and heat for 5 minutes. Remove from heat. Pour hot sauce over cubed squash or pumpkin in baking dish, moving it around to distribute the sauce. Place in oven and cook approximately 25 minutes until squash is tender. While the squash is cooking, mix the garlic, yogurt and salt together in a small bowl and stir until it is creamy. To serve, either put the half of the yogurt sauce over the middle of the cooked squash and serve immediately, passing the remainder; or serve the squash plain and pass the yogurt sauce. This second option works better if the dish is not being served immediately, because then the yogurt sauce will separate and get runny if it sits on top of the hot squash.

### **Mashawa (Afghan Chili)**

Adapted from the same great site referenced in the first recipe - from <http://www.afghancooking.net/afghan-cooking-unveiled/vegetables-beans-and-peas/>

I was not sure about this one before I made it. Boy, was I wrong! It is delicious. No, it does not taste like chili as we know it in the US, but it is full of meat and beans, and is a wonderful, casual main course. To make it even easier, you can skip the split peas altogether if you like. This one also uses the yogurt and garlic sauce, so make a bunch.

Serves 8

4T olive oil, divided

1½ lbs. beef stew meat, cut into 1 - inch cubes (could use ground meat if desired)

1 large onion, minced

6 cloves garlic, minced

1T flour

1T ground coriander

1t ground black pepper

¼ - ½ t red pepper flakes or less cayenne

2 – 3T tomato paste

2 ½ - 3c low sodium beef broth, depending on how thick you like your chili

½ t salt, or more to taste

¾ c green or yellow split peas, soaked 2 hours, cooked 20 minutes, drained

1 – 15oz. can red kidney beans, drained and rinsed

1 – 15oz. can chick peas, drained and rinsed

1T dried dill

Yogurt Sauce from previous recipe

Heat 2T oil in a heavy stew pot over medium-high heat. Add meat and brown for about 6 minutes, stirring. Remove and set aside. Add remaining 2T oil to pot and heat over medium heat. Add onions and cook, stirring, about 6 minutes. Add garlic and cook another minute. Add flour and stir to distribute. Add coriander, black pepper and red pepper flakes and stir. Add browned meat and tomato paste and stir to coat the meat with the spices and tomato paste. Add the beef broth, increase heat and bring to a boil, stirring. Reduce heat to low and simmer, partially covered, stirring occasionally, for about 25 minutes. The meat should be tender. Add the split peas, if you are using them, and cook another 5 minutes. Turn the heat up to medium-low and add the remaining beans and chick peas, and dill, and more broth if the chili seems too thick. Stir well and cook, uncovered, for 5 more minutes. Serve hot with or without rice, and with a dollop of yogurt sauce (see previous recipe).

### **Lawang (Turmeric Braised Chicken in Yogurt)**

Adapted from <http://www.afghancooking.net/afghan-cooking-unveiled/slow-fire-cooking-gorma-main-dishes/> about 2/3 of the way down the page – many good recipes here! This was a real winner. Unctuous, creamy and utterly superb. I combined several recipes to come up with this amazing main course – beautiful!

Serves 8

1 ½ c greek yogurt, brought to room temp. and stirred well (preferably at least 2% fat)  
1/3 c olive oil and/or ghee, divided  
¼ t cayenne  
½ t ground cinnamon  
1t ground cardamom  
¼ t ground cloves  
¼ t ground nutmeg  
1T turmeric  
½ t ground black pepper  
2t ground coriander  
1 large onions, very finely minced in food processor  
4 cloves garlic  
3lbs skinless, bone-in chicken legs and thighs (or just thighs)  
1t salt  
½ chopped cilantro and/or parsley, divided, half for garnish

Heat just over half of oil or ghee in a large heavy pot over medium heat. Add the spices, cayenne through coriander. Cook, stirring, for one minute. Add onions and cook, stirring, for about 8 – 10 minutes or until they are soft. Add the balance of the oil and the chicken pieces, stirring to coat the chicken with the onions and spices for a minute or so. Reduce the heat to fairly low, cover the pot and cook for about 45-55 minutes, stirring regularly to prevent sticking, until chicken is tender and cooked through. It may be necessary to add a bit of chicken broth or water to keep the sauce from getting too thick and to prevent sticking – just keep an eye on it. It should be fairly thick. When the chicken is cooked, remove the pan from the heat and allow to cool for about 10 minutes. (If you are serving this the following day, do not add the yogurt until shortly before serving. Warm the chicken up well and remove from heat. Allow to cool slightly, then proceed as follows.) Add the room temperature yogurt and half of the cilantro or parsley and stir. Reheat gently, uncovered, for about 5 – 8 minutes. Do NOT allow it to boil or it will not be very pretty! It should be thick and creamy. Garnish with remaining cilantro/parsley and serve warm with rice, and naan or pita bread.

### Desserts!

OK, so most of you have figured out by now that I do not cook desserts all that often. **I would LOVE it if one or more of you want to help with this. If you like cooking sweet things and would be willing to do it once a month for this publication, please e-mail me at [crmayers@mac.com](mailto:crmayers@mac.com) for details.** In the meantime, I did make the **Bride's Fingers** on this page: <http://www.asiarecipe.com/afgdesserts.html> They are a bit of work but are lovely. I recommend using rosewater. The flavor of orange flower water is just too weird – like eating perfume! There are several great looking recipes on this page, including a baklava recipe. There is a recipe for the Khati cookies in one of the old Food for Thoughts referenced at the beginning of this section – just let them cool before you eat them and know they are VERY crumbly. Of course, if you have a good bakery nearby you could always buy baklava. Enjoy! <http://www.asiarecipe.com/afgdesserts.html>

*Recipes provided by Carolyn Mayers*

 **Changing the world one dinner at a time**

## Sources

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.scribd.com/doc/399941/Gender-Equality-in-Islam>

<sup>3</sup> [feminist.org/afghan/facts.html](http://feminist.org/afghan/facts.html)

<sup>2</sup> [feminist.org/afghan/facts.html](http://feminist.org/afghan/facts.html)

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<sup>2</sup> [feminist.org/afghan/facts.html](http://feminist.org/afghan/facts.html)

<sup>2</sup> Aryn aker, "What Happens if We Leave Afghanistan" *Time Magazine*, August 2010. [feminist.org/afghan/facts.html](http://feminist.org/afghan/facts.html)

<sup>4</sup> [feminist.org/afghan/facts.html](http://feminist.org/afghan/facts.html)

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.un.org/events/women/2002/sit.htm>

<sup>6</sup> [www.supremecourt.gov.af/PDFFiles/constitution2004\\_english.pdf](http://www.supremecourt.gov.af/PDFFiles/constitution2004_english.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.afghan-web.com/woman/>

<sup>8</sup> Aryn Baker, "What Happens if We Leave Afghanistan" *Time Magazine*, August 2010. [feminist.org/afghan/facts.html](http://feminist.org/afghan/facts.html)

