

SHAKSHUKA

(adapted from Fried Ice and Donut Holes)

3/4 teaspoon ground cumin
1/4 cup olive oil
1 shallot, sliced
2 red bell peppers, cut into 3/4 inch strips
1 tablespoon dark brown sugar
2 bay leaves
6 thyme sprigs, leaves removed and chopped
2 tablespoons cilantro, chopped
1 can (15 ounces) of whole peeled tomatoes with their juices
1/2 teaspoon saffron threads
1/4 teaspoon Aleppo pepper
salt and pepper, to taste
up to 1 cup water
4 eggs (I used only three for the two of us)

In a very large sauté pan, heat the oil over medium-high heat until shimmering. Add the shallot and cumin and sauté for 5 minutes. Add the peppers, brown sugar, and herbs and continue to cook for 10-15 minutes to develop color. Add the tomatoes, saffron, cayenne, salt, and pepper. Reduce heat to low and cook for 15 minutes, adding water 1/4 cup at a time, so that the mix has the consistency of thick pasta sauce. Taste and adjust seasoning so that the mix is potent and flavorful.

Remove the bay leaves. Make wells for the eggs and carefully break eggs into the wells. Sprinkle with salt and pepper and cook on very low heat for about 8 minutes. Cover the pan and cook until the eggs are set, about 1 minute more. Serve right away...