The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Recipe: Chakapuli: How Spring Tastes in Georgia

By Nabi Abdullaev

April 20, 2015



When you return from Georgia, the sweats of local food withdrawal start torturing you almost immediately. Straightforward and decisive as I am, I found the easiest recipe from Georgian writer and food blogger Tinatin Mzhanavadze, whom I met Tbilisi last month, and raided the nearest outdoor market.

My catch included:

• A rack of young lamb ribs (2 kg). Bull calf ribs will do too, just add an extra half an hour on the stove

• One big bunch of each: tarragon (two bunches would be even better), dill, parsley, coriander, green onion and garlic chives

• One green chili pepper (a red one will do)

• One garlic bulb;

• A bottle of tkemali sauce made of green cherry plums from any ubiquitous Georgian vendor. Georgians will now boo me but, honestly, there are no real cherry plums in Moscow in April.

One will also need half a bottle of white dry wine, 50 grams of butter, 500 grams of onion, a spoonful of ground coriander and salt to taste.

Separate the ribs by one or two and cut them in half. Tear the tarragon leaves from their stems and throw the stems away. Wash the herbs and let them dry. Cut the onions into strips.

Put a layer of ribs in the bottom of a pan, then put pats of butter on the meat. Cover the meat with the herbs and chopped garlic cloves, sprinkle with salt and spices and pour half a bottle of tkemali on top.

Then repeat the procedure, starting with another layer of ribs.

Put the pot on high heat. When the stew starts boiling, turn the temperature down to low.

After 40 minutes, pour the wine in the pot. Two more hours and voila, your gustatory cells will be overwhelmed by the powerful vitality of lamb.

Georgians recommend washing down chakapuli with white wine, but the rougher life in Moscow suggests trying it with vodka instead — it is amazing how nicely vodka goes with the stuff.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2015/04/20/recipe-chakapuli-how-spring-tastes-in-georgia-a45917