Chicken Mole

Quick · Serves 4–6

Ken's note: TBD

A quick, unusual mole: chili powder, cumin, and cinnamon are cooked in oil until almost black and smoking, which gives the sauce its smoky, sweet depth, then melted with unsweetened chocolate and stewed tomatoes. It looks like you burned the spices. You didn't. Turn on the overhead fan.

Ingredients

Spice mix

- 2 Tbsp mild chili powder
- 2 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- A few shakes of cayenne (optional)

The rest

- 1½ lb chicken breasts, cut into chunks or strips
- Cayenne and coarse black pepper, for seasoning
- Olive oil
- 1½ oz unsweetened chocolate (Baker's)
- 4 cans (14.5 oz) stewed tomatoes
- White rice, to serve

Method

1. Season the chicken with cayenne and black pepper (this is where to set the heat; use plenty for a spicy mole, since the sauce is mild). Heat a few tablespoons of oil over high heat in a large, deep 4-quart nonstick pan. Sear the chicken until just done, without overcooking, and set it aside.
2. Reduce the heat to medium-high and add a few more tablespoons of oil. Shake in the spice mix and stir, adding oil until all of it is moistened. Cook 6–7 minutes or more, stirring so it heats evenly, until it turns almost black and smokes.
3. Lower the heat to low and add the chocolate, swirling until it's fully melted (this also stops the spices from blackening further). Add the tomatoes, bring to a boil, and simmer over medium heat 10 minutes, stirring now and then. Return the chicken and simmer 5 minutes more. Taste and salt at the end. Serve over white rice.